

Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India

Volume One
1917 — 1922

Edited with introductory
and explanatory notes by
G. ADHIKARI



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Publisher's Note

The National Council of the Communist Party of India entrusted Dr G. Adhikari to undertake the work of collecting, editing and annotating the documents relating to the history of the Communist Party of India. This is the first volume of the series.

Preface

What is being placed in the hands of the reader is only the first part of the originally planned first volume of the documents of the history of the Communist Party of India. It was to cover the period—"From Tashkent to Kanpur" (1920 to 1925)—from the first formation of the party in Tashkent by emigre Indian revolutionaries in October 1920 together with earlier developments right up to the First Party Conference in Kanpur in 1925, when the first central committee was formed and the first constitution adopted. As the work proceeded it was found that the selected documents of this period with introductory historical notes would become a bulky unwieldy volume. Therefore it was decided to bring out the first part up to the end of 1922, and follow it up in the coming year with the second part—up to the end of December 1925.

What is being attempted in this series is a source-book on the history of the party and not the history itself. It was thought that before a collective effort is made at the highest level to produce an authoritative history of the party, the basic documentary material should be made available to the public as a first step.

The overwhelming majority of the documents are the publications of the party—legally or illegally brought out

according to the conditions prevalent at the time—publications through which the party came before the people of India, making its contribution to India's struggle for independence, to the organisation of the workers, peasants and other exploited masses in their struggle for the completion of the anti-imperialist, antifeudal revolution and for carrying it forward to the building of socialism.

As the party has been for the best part of its over 40 years of existence a target of repression, its offices, leaders and workers have been subject to searches, raids, confiscations and arrests, it has not been able to preserve a continuous record of its activities and development, either at the central—all-India—or at the state or provincial level. The difficulties encountered in collecting and chronologically arranging this record were so great that the priority given to this task as against that of writing a fullfledged history was fully justified.

The documents, journals, booklets, leaflets, etc. produced legally and illegally by the Communist Party in the period before independence, which had been seized by the police or the CID, are not available even today, 24 years after independence, in the National Archives of India or in the various state archives. The reason for this, probably, is that this material is still lying in the record libraries of the offices of the central intelligence department in Simla, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and also in the record rooms of the various district courts (and in Pakistan too). After independence and even over two decades thereafter, the national and state archives remained exactly as we inherited them from the British. The successor government led by the Indian National Congress made no effort whatsoever to transfer the material relating to the Indian national liberation movement from the police and court records to the central and state archives and to make them *national* archives in the real sense of the term.

It is quite understandable that the British rulers were interested in keeping the police and intelligence department records separate and secret. They used this material to produce from time to time lengthy confidential printed

reports on "Communism in India" and also on the terrorist and national revolutionary activities in the country. We have referred in the general introduction to three such reports dealing with the periods 1918 to 1924, 1924 to 1927 and 1927 to 1933, produced by the intelligence bureau of the home department and printed in the Government of India Press.

As we have also stated there, the Congress government seems to have continued the practice of the British rulers, and used the separately and secretly kept records and material of the intelligence department to produce a two-volume bulky work on the "History of the Communist Party of India", each volume of some 600 pages and printed in the Parliamentary Press. The preface to the first volume is dated some time in 1962 and is signed by the director of the central intelligence bureau.

We have stated these facts, which are based on reliable information, to illustrate the difficulty of obtaining the original documentary material regarding the history of the Communist Party. At the same time it must be stated that quite a large amount of material is available from the Party Archives itself both at the central and state levels, and much has been obtained through the good offices of individual comrades and friends as well as from the national and state archives of the Government of India. The editor is keenly conscious of the deficiencies, gaps and inaccuracies which are undoubtedly there in the present volume and wants to make it clear that these are entirely due to his own incapacity to fully get at and utilise the available sources mentioned above. The shortcomings and imperfections of the national and state archives of the Government of India have not been mentioned in the spirit of presenting an alibi for the editor's own deficiencies.

The collection of documents to be presented in this and succeeding volumes concern the birth, growth and development of the political and organisational activities of the Communist Party at the all-India or central level. The attempt is that the documents and introductory editorial notes should together present before the reader a panorama

of facts and events on an all-India plane. The documents are arranged as far as possible in strict chronological order and also in well-defined and natural periods of party history.

The history of the party from its early beginnings in the early twenties and before to 1964 when the party split, i.e. the history of over forty years when the party was united, falls naturally into four main periods.

First period from the early twenties to the end of 1935: This is the period of party formation, at the end of which the party comes before the country and its people as a sizable and significant mass political force, contributing to the national freedom movement two new factors—firstly, a scientifically formulated political and economic programme of national independence and, secondly, an independent class-oriented workers' and peasants' movement. Three rounds of repression launched by the British rulers against the party fall in this period. These are: (a) the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases of 1922-23, (b) the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case of 1924, and (c) the Meerut Communist Conspiracy Case of 1929-33.

Second period from 1936 to 1947: In this period the party develops into a mass political organisation on an all-India basis. It strengthens and broadens the class-based independent mass organisations of workers and peasants—the AITUC and AIKS—and builds the students' and women's movements. It plays its part in the country's freedom movement, seeking to give it the form of a united national anti-imperialist front, fighting for a programme of national independence, democracy and radical agrarian reforms, and striving to raise the mass struggle for this to a higher revolutionary level. In doing so it always maintained that our freedom movement was an inseparable part of the worldwide struggle of the working class of the advanced countries fighting for democracy and socialism, of the oppressed peoples of the colonial world fighting for their independence and of the first socialist state in the Soviet Union fighting to defend itself and its growing socialist

order against imperialism. The First Party Congress was held in 1925.

Third period from 1943 to the end of 1953: This was a period of transition—of innerparty struggle to understand the new alignment of the class forces after the attainment of independence and the partitioning of the country, to formulate the strategical and tactical tasks of the working class and its party in the struggle to complete the unfinished national democratic revolution and to open the path to socialism, and to reorganise and equip the party for discharging these tasks. In this period were held the Second Party Congress from 28 February to 6 March 1948, and an All-India Party Conference in October 1951 in Calcutta, and the Third Party Congress in Madurai from 27 December 1953 to 4 January 1954.

Fourth period from 1954 to 1964: In this period the party emerges as the leading opposition party, as a party of the working class, a party of worker-peasant alliance, championing the cause of all sections of the exploited and oppressed masses, striving to build the broad national democratic front for completing the unfinished revolution, for reversing the trend to capitalist development and to the growth of monopoly, for an alternative path of development which would lead the country to national democracy and socialism. In this period were held the Fourth Party Congress at Palghat from 6 to 13 April 1955, Fifth Special Congress at Amritsar from 6 to 13 April 1958, Sixth Congress at Vijayawada from 7 to 16 April 1961 and the Seventh Congress in Bombay from 13 to 23 December 1964.

Each period is again subdivided into subperiods. For instance the first period naturally falls into three subperiods: (a) from 1920 to the first communist conference held at Kanpur at the end of 1925, (b) from 1926 to 1929, and (c) from 1930 to 1935. The present volume as stated at the beginning covers only the first part of the first subperiod, and goes up to the end of 1922.

There was considerable difficulty in obtaining the documents produced here and in tracing the early developments

which led to the formation of the party in Tashkent and later to the formation of communist groups in India itself. Some documents were got from the collections of the party itself, some from the record of the Kanpur Conspiracy Case preserved in the record room of the Kanpur district court, some from the National Archives of India. The editor is greatly indebted to the Central Committee of the CPSU which made available the photostats of the original typed copy of M. N. Roy's Supplementary Theses on the National and Colonial Questions with Lenin's cuts and changes in his own handwriting. Microfilms of the issues of the *Vanguard* were obtained from the same source.

In tracing the pre-1920 developments, which in the main consisted of the impact of the Great October Socialist Revolution of Russia on the militants in the contemporary Indian national movement, i.e. the noncooperation and the so-called Khilafat movements, and in the Ghadar movement, the reminiscences of some revolutionaries and of the Muhajirs were of great value. Special mention must be made of Dr Bhupendranath Dutta's *Aprakashita Rajnaitik Itihas*, Abinash Bhattacharya's *Europe Bharatiya Biplaber Sadhana*, M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, travel accounts of Rafi Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani. Valuable material about Virendranath Chattopadhyaya was brought by Chinmohan Sehanavis from Madame Karunovskaya of Leningrad which enabled us to highlight the pioneer role of this great Indian revolutionary in those early developments. Dr Horst Kruger of the Institute for Oriental Research of the GDR Academy of Sciences also helped by supplying some information in this regard. Some material about M. Barakatullah was also obtained from Moscow by Sehanavis. For the copy of the original papers of the party formation in Tashkent we are indebted to Dr Devendra Kaushik and his paper in the monthly *New Age*.

M. N. Roy's publications from abroad (books and pamphlets) when he was in the Eastern Bureau of the Communist International—(1) *India in Transition*, (2) *What Do We Want?*, (3) *India's Problem and Its Solution*, (4) *Political Letters*, and (5) *One Year of Noncooperation*—were pub-

lished in 1923 but contain earlier first and fourth items are in our publications had to be microfilm copies in the record of the Kanpur Conspiracy Case. These are apart from the *Vanguard* which appeared as a fortnightly from abroad between May 1922 and the end of 1924.

S. A. Dange's *Gandhi vs Lenin* was in the party's collections. The file of *Socialist* for 1922 starting from August could not be obtained. Typed copies of some articles from these issues were got from Dange himself while some important quotations from other articles from the *Socialist* of the same period were found in the confidential publication of the British intelligence bureau—*Communism in India* (Cecil Kaye).

Chinmohan Sehanavis's valuable paper "Russian Revolution and the Indian Revolutionaries", which came out in *Kalantar* weekly (Bengali) in 30 instalments, contains far more detailed account of some of these early developments. P. C. Joshi's document on "Lenin's Image in the Indian Press" also contains valuable material.

The attempt in this volume is not only to print the documents but to add introductory and historical notes so that the whole should read a more or less connected story. The same method will be followed for the succeeding volumes. How far this attempt has succeeded and how far it is useful can only be judged when the reactions of readers and critics are available.

The work for the present and succeeding volumes is made possible by the facilities and resources placed at my disposal by the Central Executive Committee and the Central Secretariat of the party. The continuous help and suggestions given to me by Chinmohan Sehanavis and Mohit Sen in the course of this work have been of great value. Thanks are due to Balan who not only typed the manuscript and documents but also arranged and filed the latter in such a way that a nucleus of the central archives of the party has emerged out of the collection made for this work. The job of checking up the manuscript and preparing the same for

the press was done by M. B. Rao. Anil Rajimwale and Subodh Roy also eased my work in many ways.

In spite of this generous help I have received from all sides, there are bound to be shortcomings, errors and inaccuracies in the present volume. If readers and critics point them out, it would be helpful in preparing the succeeding volumes.

14 September 1971

New Delhi

G. ADHIKARI

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Abbreviations Used

- ARI — *Aprakashita Rajnaitik Itihas*, Dr Bhupendranath Dutta, Calcutta, 1953 (Bengali)
- CA — *Central Asia in Modern Times*, Devendra Kaushik, Moscow, 1970
- CI-CP1 — *The Communist International*, CPI Publication, Delhi, 1969
- CI-JD — *Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents*, Vol. I, Jane Degras, Oxford University Press, London, 1936
- CI-SHO — *The Communist International—A Short Historical Outline*, Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CC, CPSU, Moscow, 1970 (German)
- CW — *Collected Works*, V. I. Lenin, Vols. 1-45, Moscow
- EBBS — *Europe Bharatiya Biplaber Sadhana*, Dr Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya, Calcutta, 1958 (Bengali)
- FCAR — *Formation of Central Asian Republics*, R. Vaidyanath, Delhi, 1967
- FR — *First Reader of New Science of Thought*, Mahendra Pratap, Dehra Dun
- IL — *India and Lenin*, Anand Gupta, Delhi, 1960
- IT — *India Today*, R. Paline Dutt, Calcutta, 1970
- LSK — *Life of Shyamji Krishnavarma*, Indulal Yagnik, Bombay

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ML	— <i>My Life of Fifty-five Years</i> , Mahendra Pratap, Dehra Dun, 1953
NAI-FPD	— National Archives of India, Foreign and Political Department ²
NAI-HPD	— National Archives of India, Home and Political Department
PM	— <i>Peshawar to Moscow</i> , Shaukat Usmani, Delhi, 1927
RE	— <i>Reflections of an Exile</i> , Mahendra Pratap, Lahore, 1946
RM	— <i>M. N. Roy's Memoirs</i> , Allied, Delhi, 1964

General Introduction to Documents of 1917-1920

"The Communist Party of India arose in the course of our liberation struggle as a result of the efforts of Indian revolutionaries, who under the inspiration of the Great October Revolution were seeking new paths for achieving national independence."

This was stated in the Preamble to the Party Constitution adopted at the extraordinary congress at Amritsar in April 1958, when the party was united. Among the Indian revolutionaries in India's liberation movement, in the period of the first world war and in the years immediately following the same, we can identify four trends from which individuals and groups in their search for new paths for the struggle for independence turned to scientific socialism and communism under the impact of the Great October Revolution of Russia on 7 November 1917. These four trends are the following:

(1) Indian national revolutionaries operating from abroad in the period of the first world war and thereafter from Germany, the USA, Turkey and Afghanistan, who earlier functioned through the Berlin Committee and the "provisional government of Independent India" or otherwise and later came to be influenced by the October Revolution—amongst whom we have such outstanding names as V. Chattopadhyaya, M. Barakatullah, M.P.B.T. Acharya, M. N. Roy and Abanī Mukherji.

(2) National revolutionaries from the Pan-Islamic Khilafat movement, who went abroad in the war period (1914-16) and those from the great Hijrat movement of the postwar period and who similarly later came under the influence of the October Revolution among whom we have such names as Mohammad Ali Sepassi, Rahmat Ali Khan, Ferozuddin Mansoor and Abdul Majid and Shaukat Usmani.

(3) National revolutionaries of the Ghadar Party organised among the Sikh and Punjabi emigrant labour (USA) before the first world war, who staged an unsuccessful revolution in 1915 at the time when Komagata Maru arrived in India. We are not here concerned with the first period of the Ghadar Party but the second, postwar period when it was reorganised and revived by Rattan Singh and Santokh Singh, with the latter as the general secretary, and who in 1922 took the initiative to establish contact with the Communist International

(4) The fourth and the most important trend was of the national revolutionaries in India itself—from the leftwing of the National Congress, the terrorist organisations and parties, the Khilafat movement, the Akali movement (especially its Babar Akali leftwing which was linked with the Ghadar Party). Individuals and groups from this trend—when disillusioned with Gandhiji's ideology of nonviolent resistance after the debacle of the movement in 1921-22 or those who never accepted the same—turned to scientific socialism and the class organisation of workers and peasants under the impact of the October Revolution and later became the founders of the early communist groups in different parts of the country, e.g. Dange in Bombay, Singaravelu in Madras, Muzaffar Ahmad in Calcutta and the Inqilab group in Lahore.

In the earliest phase, before the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case in mid-1924, these groups were sought to be coordinated by the communist centre organised abroad on the basis of the Communist Party of India formed at Tashkent on 17 October 1920 by M. N. Roy and others soon after the Second Congress of the Communist International.

These communist groups or their representatives came together at the First Indian Communist Conference at Kanpur at the end of December 1925, which was convened by Satyabhakta with his own ideas, but which was taken over by the real communists rejecting his ideas.

The Kanpur conference did not produce a clearly defined policy statement, though it adopted the essentials of the programme put forward by the CPI at the Gaya Congress, and a constitution of the party. But its main achievement was that it brought the representatives of the early communist groups formed in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Punjab and the North generally together in one "central committee". It was this central committee with subsequent changes which acted as a guiding centre and, functioning on an all-India plane in the next period of 1926 to 1929 (up to Meerut arrests), initiated a new mass movement in the country—the building of the first militant mass trade unions based on class struggle and a peasant movement fighting against landlordism.

It led a mass upsurge of big strike struggles and peasant morchas and demonstrations, which brought political and class consciousness to the toiling masses. It initiated a new political movement by openly organising workers', and peasants' parties in different parts of the

country, whose representatives functioned and worked in the Indian National Congress, seeking to organise a broad leftwing support for a national revolutionary programme while at the same time building an independent mass base in workers' and peasants' class organisations which were to serve as a mass force trying to give a national revolutionary direction to the country's movement for national independence.

It was in this sense that the leadership of the Communist Party of India when it was united decided on 18 August 1959 to adopt the date of the Kanpur Communist Conference as the date of the formation of the party. This does not mean we should minimise the importance and significance of the foundation of the party at Tashkent in October 1920 by those representatives from the first two trends who were the first to turn to scientific socialism and the Communist International under the impact of the socialist revolution in Russia.

On the basis of the CPI formed in Tashkent, a centre was created abroad which did a lot of ideological and propaganda work as reflected in the documents and material reproduced in this volume. It also helped the communist groups which came into existence in the different parts of India and sought to coordinate them. These groups also tried to keep in touch with each other on their own, as was shown in the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case (1924).

It was not a one-way process—the centre abroad, which was in close touch with the appropriate organ of the Comintern, sending guidance and the groups here carrying out those—as has been represented by noncommunist "historians". It was indeed a two-way process in which the independent thinking and acting of groups and comrades here played a considerable part. Besides, the contact with the centre outside had to be kept through underground methods. This was further rendered difficult by British intelligence service and British repression. Books, pamphlets and journals produced abroad did not always reach here either in time or in sufficient number.

All this has been stated at the outset to throw light on the formative developments which led to the foundation of the party on 26 December 1925 at Kanpur, when the first central committee was formed and the first constitution framed.

There is another point. The relation between the centre formed abroad on the basis of the party formed at Tashkent is later defined at the insistence of the comrades outside and it is incorporated in the constitution adopted in the central committee meeting after the Kanpur conference. Thus the centre abroad becomes the "Foreign Bureau" of the CPI formed here. We shall deal with this question in the note introducing the documents and resolutions of the First Communist Conference. This will again bring out the primary importance of the foundation of the party at Kanpur.

There is still another point. Was the CPI formed at Tashkent affiliated to the Communist International? This also will be dealt with later when we print the relevant documents in relation to this point from the proto-

cols (stenographic reports) of the various congresses of the Comintern after the Second Congress

In defining the four trends, we spoke of Indian national revolutionaries in the various movements and organisations which came together in the national liberation upsurge of 1919-22—namely, the terrorist, the Khilafatist (especially the Muhajirs), the Akali (especially the Babar Akalis who were linked with the Ghadar Party) and the Indian National Congress—from all of which individuals and groups came to scientific socialism and communism. We emphasised the word "national" because in all these movements there was a considerably strong religious-parochial trend. It was the nationalists, as distinct from the religious-communal trends, from whom mainly the revolutionary and leftwing socialist trend arose.

When we talk of the leftwing socialist trend among Indian revolutionaries, it contains both the Marxist-socialist and the anarchist-socialist trends. It is only after the October Revolution and its impact on Indian revolutionaries as a whole that a distinctly scientific socialist trend crystallised. It is also necessary to point out that in those early days of the first world war the religious-communal trend and the strictly national trend were not sharply demarcated among Indian revolutionaries. There was interpenetration of the two. Pan-Islamists called themselves also nationalists and among the nationalists who sought to distinguish themselves from the Pan-Islamists there were those who had Hindu religious or Arya Samajist bias. Sentiments of Muslim communalism to the extent of Pakistan separation or Hindu raj majority chauvinism had not yet arisen.

In tracing the genesis of the Communist Party of India, we have in the main to deal with the activities of Indian revolutionaries of all trends after the victory of the Russian revolution in 1917 and the defeat of the central powers in 1918. But it is necessary to take into account the salient features of the historical and ideological background of these activities of Indian revolutionaries of all trends in the period of the first world war (1914-18), though in the most generalised form.

Indian revolutionaries abroad were not just individuals who had escaped abroad to avoid long terms in jail or death sentences, but these and many others were sent abroad with a plan by their respective organisations and parties to organise centres abroad to further the cause of India's national liberation from foreign yoke, to get help and do propaganda for that cause. These centres, formed in Western Europe, America, the Middle East and South-East Asia, recruited fresh cadres for revolutionary work from among Indian students, businessmen and professionals as well as the emigrant labour abroad. Thus we see that Indian revolutionaries abroad were organised, and had close links with and represented the parent organisations in India.

Even before the first world war, Indian revolutionaries abroad found that their cause got support mainly from progressive, socialist and labour movements in Europe and America, and sympathy from sister

national liberation movements in the Middle East and South-East Asia. Thus we find Indian revolutionaries Madame Cama and Rana going to the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart (1907) to plead the cause of Indian independence; Shyamji Krishnavarma issuing *The Indian Sociologist* abroad, Indian revolutionaries in the USA coming under the influence of the IWW. Hardayal wrote an essay on the life of Karl Marx (*Modern Review*, March 1912, pp. 273-86, entitled "Karl Marx—a Modern Rishi"). But when first world war broke out and the central powers (Austro-German imperialists) declared war on Britain (British imperialists) some noted Indian revolutionaries then in Germany took the initiative to contact the German government to secure help for their revolutionary activity to free India. They were acting on the basis of the dictum that the enemy of our enemy is our friend! The Berlin Committee which came into being as a result of this initiative received the support of Indian revolutionaries abroad living in all countries and of all trends.

Centres of activity emerged not only in Berlin but in Constantinople and the Middle East (when Turkey joined the central powers), in Kabul (Afghanistan) and in California (USA) where the Ghadar Party was already formed before the war among the Indian emigrant labour.

What was the nature of the revolutionary activities undertaken by these centres? Efforts were made to get into and have contact with Indian army units under British command fighting the Turks in the Middle East and conduct revolutionary propaganda among them (exploit of B. N. Das Gupta and M. P. B. T. Acharya). Work was done among Indian army personnel taken prisoner after the fall of Kut-el-Amara, and an attempt was made to form an Indian national armed force for action against the British in the NW frontier region of India by enlisting the support of the free Pathan tribes there. There was the formation of a "provisional government of independent India" in Kabul by Mahendra Pratap, Barakatullah, Obeidullah and others.

These activities of Indian revolutionaries abroad, based on German help, were coordinated with similar activities of revolutionary groups active in India itself. This is shown by the fact that when the ship *Komagata Maru*, chartered by the Ghadar Party to effect the entry of Indian emigrant labour into Canada, was rebuffed and returned to India, an unsuccessful rebellion in the Indian army (1915) took place in which Vishnu Hari Pingle and many Indian soldiers suffered martyrdom and after which Rash Behari Bose escaped to Japan. This coordination is prominently seen in the steady flow of Ghadarite revolutionaries into India from this base in California (Pingle was one of them) and in the daring attempts to send arms to India through ships such as the *Maverik* and *Annie Larsen* to aid the activities of the Bengal revolutionaries in the war period and in which M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji played a role in the early part of their career.

We have merely mentioned a few landmarks in the revolutionary activities of Indian revolutionaries abroad in the years of the first world

war. They are referred to as the Indo-German Conspiracy in the British government records, in the court papers of the early Lahore Conspiracy Cases and in the Rowlatt Commission. Another source of information about them are the relevant papers of the German foreign office. Other source literature on them are the two Bengali books, particularly Dr Bhupendranath Dutta's *Aprakashita Rajnaitik Itihas* (Calcutta 1953) and Dr Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya's *Europe Bharatiya Bipalab Sadhana* (Calcutta, 1958) as well as books on the history of the Ghadar Party. These events were the precursor and the pattern for similar developments in extended form which took place in the period of the second world war, when under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose the Azad Hind government and the INA were formed with the help of Japanese and Germans.

The work of Indian revolutionaries abroad in the period of the first world war and before it is a neglected chapter in the history of our national liberation movement. Life of Shyamji Krishnavarma by Indulal Yagnik is an excellent contribution in this field. Life and work of Virendranath Chattopadhyaya—who carried forward the torch lit by Shyamji and his contemporaries like Savarkar and others in the period of the first world war, and of many others who worked abroad with him and under his leadership—is a field in which much work remains to be done.

We may have our own opinion about Indian revolutionaries in the first world war cooperating with the Austro-German imperialists or Subhas Chandra Bose cooperating with the fascists in the period of the second world war. That should not in any way deter us from recognising that in doing so they were moved by sterling patriotism, by their single-minded commitment to the cause of India's national liberation. Objectively they were utilising the contradictions in the imperialist camp and their efforts did contribute to the struggle for our independence and its final victory. Indian revolutionaries in both the cases attempted to retain their independence and did not become tools of imperialists or fascists and when historical records are fully studied it will be revealed how contradictions developed between them and the imperialists and fascists.

Dr Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya in his abovementioned book reproduces the draft document which Virendranath Chattopadhyaya had himself presented to the representative of the German government in their first negotiations. This put forward the conditions on which the cooperation between Indian revolutionaries and the German government must rest. These conditions prove that Indian revolutionaries not only took an independent stand but also show that they were adherents of a leftwing socialist ideology. We quote some of these conditions:

"(9) We should be enabled to organise an 'Indo-German Committee' acceptable to us and the responsibility of conducting revolution in India must be placed on this said committee.

"(10) India has many powerful princes if some of them strive to set

up a monarchy either in the whole of India or in their own state, the Austro-German powers must not in any way assist them but on the other hand help us in setting up a republic as proposed by us

"(11) If our revolution is victorious, it would be our desire to establish a socialist republican state in India in which case the Austro-German powers would not be allowed to obstruct the same in any way" (EBBS, pp. 146-47).

The author further records that the German representative "read through all these conditions, was silent for a few minutes and then replied, that if one or the other among the conditions were not quite impossible to carry out, the German government gives its word of honour that they would observe all the conditions".

That the German reply is diplomatic is not surprising. In his reply to an enquiry a GDR scholar who has gone through the relevant German government papers reveals that neither this fact nor this draft is mentioned in them. All the same the very fact that Dr Bhattacharya mentions that they put forward such conditions is itself valuable and sufficient to prove our contention.

Dr Bhupendranath Dutta stresses the point that there was a fairly strong socialist trend among Indian revolutionaries abroad, when he describes the stir created among them by the October Revolution in this remarkable passage:

"There was a stir in the minds of the emigrant revolutionaries in Europe after the Russian revolution. Some of them held leftwing socialist opinions even earlier. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and Tirumal Acharya had joined the Anarchist Communist Party in Paris. The writer in his student days in New York had become a member of the Bronx Park Socialist Club; Madame Cama was a leftwinger. I have heard that she had sympathy for the Bolshevik ideology. In 1925 when the writer was taking leave of her (on his way back home) she told him in mixed English and French, 'Keep your flag high like Admiral Tojo and organise the ouvriers et paysans of India' (English as in the original). The French socialist leader Jaures and Karl Marx's grandson Longuet were her friends. Indian revolutionaries in their stay abroad received sympathy for the struggle for their country's independence only from the leftwing Europeans. From England's socialist leader Hyndman, to the anarchist leader Peter Kropotkin and the Bolshevik leader Lenin—all of them wished to see India independent. Hence when one of these parties made a revolution and established their own state, all leftwingers should turn to it. All revolutionaries therefore turned to Moscow. Moscow became the 'New Mecca' for them" (ARI, pp. 255-56).

Even after the victory of the February revolution, when the workers and peasants of Russia organised in their Soviets had overthrown the tsar, when the bourgeois-democratic government under Kerensky continued to keep Russia in the war, a certain turn in the war situation began of which Indian revolutionaries abroad had to take note. Discontent and unrest expressing itself in strikes and in yearning for peace

began among the workers in belligerent countries. The voice of the Bolsheviks and Lenin calling for the end of war, for peace without annexations, for the self-determination of nations began to be heard in Russia and in spite of war-censorship even among workers in the belligerent countries. The Second International—the Socialist International, had broken down when its reformist leaders had trooped behind their own respective bourgeoisie in support of war. But now leftwing socialists under the pressure of workers' discontent began to raise their voice for the end of war and for peace, especially in the countries of western allies and in the neutral countries in Europe. International socialist conferences calling for peace began to be convened in neutral countries, though these were soon dominated by reformist socialist leaders.

In the spring and autumn of 1917, i.e. before the victory of October Revolution when a real turningpoint came in the over-all war situation, Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin Committee began to sense that their hopes of bringing about an Indian revolution with the help of German imperialists were not going to be realised. The Ghadar revolt of 1915 and many other uprisings in the Indian army had taken place in the first three years of the war. These had taken place without the aid of Germans, through the flaming patriotism and daring heroism of Indian revolutionaries working in India and abroad. The British had felt their impact—and Lord Sydenham had appraised it in the following words "During the last three years we were threatened with the most dangerous and desperate Indian revolution since the great Mutiny of 1857" (*Sunday Times*, 21 October 1917). But these were crushed and with the waning fortunes of the Germans in the war a revival with their aid seemed difficult, though efforts continued even up to 1918. But Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin Committee were already switching to a new line of activity and looking for new allies for the cause.

At the beginning of 1917, the socialist parties of Holland and Sweden convened an International Socialist Conference in Stockholm with the aim of "achieving peace". The conference was postponed several times and met ultimately in September 1917. The Berlin Committee issued a pamphlet to put the Indian case before the conference. But, as Dr Bhupendranath Dutta records, this conference was dominated by reformist socialists who were pro-western allies and they were not prepared to take note of the cause of the peoples oppressed by the "allied nations" (ARI, p. 58).

The Berlin Committee had the same experience at the beginning of 1919, when in Berne (Switzerland) another international conference met. It sent a memorandum to this conference. But it was suppressed due to the dominant influence of the reformist British labour leaders on the conference (ARI, p. 83).

In 1917, the Berlin Committee established its branch in Stockholm. It appears that V. Chattopadhyaya and Dr B. N. Dutta shifted to Stock-

holm for some time to organise this branch. Chattopadhyaya, as we now know from the autobiographical speech he made in 1934 in Leningrad (see documents of 1917), made an attempt to meet Lenin in Stockholm, when the latter passed through the Scandinavian capital on his way to Petrograd from Zurich. Chattopadhyaya records that he was very much disappointed when he learnt that Lenin had already left. This was in the spring of 1917. Dr Dutta records that in Stockholm they came in contact with the Bolsheviks in the month before the October Revolution. He describes how one Troyansky befriended them in Stockholm and when he returned to Russia after the socialist revolution he established a Russo-Indian Society and published a "Blue Book" on India in Russian. It is in Stockholm that Indian revolutionaries came to know of the bold stand for peace and self-determination of the oppressed people which the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was taking. The Stockholm Committee addressed a remarkable appeal to the Petrograd Soviet just on the eve of the Great October. This appeal which was sent from Stockholm by telegram reads as follows:

"Revolutionary Russia is striving for a lasting peace on the basis of the right of self-determination being guaranteed to all nations. But the instructions given to Mr Skobelev deputed to Paris do not correspond to this striving, as these totally miss the fundamental questions of India, Egypt and Ireland. Indians, Egyptians and the Irish are thoroughly imbued with the conviction that complete self-determination is their inalienable (natural) right. The freedom movement among these peoples has reached such a sweep that a lasting peace is impossible without a positive solution of their problem. In the name of fidelity to the ideas of the Russian revolution and in consideration of the tremendous significance of emancipated India to Russia and to the whole world, we request the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet to put up a dauntless fight against the shameless and cruel imperialism of England both at the Paris Conference and in the course of the peace negotiations" (*Der Neue Orient*, Vol. 2, 1917, p. 107).

This telegram was sent some time before September 1917, as it appears in the periodical of the German foreign office which was published in early October 1917. It is significant because it shows that Indian revolutionaries were seeking to contact Bolsheviks even before they had come to power in Russia. This is further made clear by the reference to Skobelev, who was a minister in Kerensky government about that time. Early in September 1917 Lenin was writing about this Skobelev thus:

"For months, the 'republicans', Kerensky, Skobelev, Chernov and Co, have been cheating the Russian workers and peasants, instead of abrogating the secret predatory treaties, instead of offering precise, clear-cut and fair peace terms to all the belligerent nations." ("Leaflet on Capture of Riga" written on 4 September 1917, CW. 41, p. 444).

Instructions to Skobelev from the Kerensky government for his Paris

mission could not have contained any reference to India, Egypt and Persia and their right of self-determination. This government, as is well known, continued the war, launched an offensive in which several thousands lost their lives, when Riga was captured from the Germans, it told the people: If we now stopped the war, Riga would have to be given back to the Germans. Lenin explained how Kerensky and his ministers were cheating the people and not taking a principled stand on peace. It is true, said Lenin, "when brigands negotiate on peace they either keep their own booty or swap pieces of it". Riga did not belong to the Germans but to Latvia. Germans could only claim it as their booty "That is how all wars have ended and will end, so long as power remains in the hands of capitalists", explained Lenin and added:

"But we speak of a workers' government which alone can offer just peace terms right away, and this has been stated hundreds of times by workers and peasants throughout Russia in their countless mandates and resolutions. These terms are: peace without annexations, i.e. without the seizure of foreign lands. This means: neither the Germans nor the Russians will be able forcibly, without voluntary consent of the Poles, to integrate Poland or the Latvian territory; neither the Turks nor the Russians will be able to seize Armenia and so on" (CW 41, p. 445).

This brings out another significance of this telegram of Indian revolutionaries. The Stockholm Committee—this meant Chattopadhyaya and perhaps Dr Dutta who were in charge of it at the time—seemed to have understood at that early date that Bolsheviks stood for a "lasting peace based on the right of self-determination of nations", i.e. for "peace without annexations, i.e. without seizure foreign lands" (irrespective of from whom they were seized). Significantly they turned away from the representative of the Kerensky government to the Petrograd Workers and Soldiers' Soviet, where Bolsheviks were in a majority and which was to play a leading role in the coming October Revolution, and called upon it to put up a dauntless fight against the shameless and cruel imperialism of England both at the Paris conference and in the course of peace negotiation.

In fact the Berlin Committee as well as the branch in Stockholm made systematic efforts to establish contact with Bolsheviks and Lenin as soon as they came to power. According to Dr Dutta, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya on behalf of the Stockholm Committee sent a telegram to Trotsky, who then headed a delegation negotiating on behalf of the Soviet government a separate peace treaty with the Germans, to raise the question of India's right of self-determination. This was after the other belligerent nations had rejected the appeal for peace without annexations which the Soviet government had issued immediately after coming to power in November 1917.

The Soviet delegation did this by stating: "Let the central powers concede the right of self-determination to the nations under their domination and let the allies, i.e. Russia, France and England, also accept

was already offering ceasefire to President Wilson. The German revolution began on 8 November 1918, on 10 November the kaiser fled, a German republic was proclaimed and on 11 November the armistice was signed

At this time there was a Soviet embassy in Germany and Joffe was the ambassador. The Berlin Committee established contact with him and the possibility of an official representative of the same going to Soviet Russia arose. Those were the days of instability in Germany when the contest for power between the forces of revolution and counter-revolution had begun. The Soviet ambassador was suddenly expelled for political reasons. Even then Joffe was willing to take a representative of the Berlin Committee with him to Soviet Russia when he left. But it could not spare anybody. This was the Berlin Committee's last effort to contact Bolsheviks. This is the account given by Dr Dutta (ARI, p. 247). Thereafter the Berlin Committee—as formed in 1914 and which later took on the name of "Indian Independence Committee"—was formally dissolved (ARI p. 248).

Before we leave the year 1918, the last war year, it is necessary to record that at the end of the year two Indians made a long and difficult journey all the way from Constantinople, via Berlin to Moscow. Anand Gupta, in his *India and Lenin* (New Delhi, April 1960) describes them as the "first Indian delegation in Moscow". Quoting from Russian sources, from contemporary Russian newspapers like *Izvestia* and from a journal *Problems of Orientology* (No. 2, 1959) which reprinted some of the archive material, he brings out the following facts:

—The names of the two Indians as given in these sources are "Prof Ahmad Harris and Prof Mohammadi Hadl".

—They addressed a meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, Soviet Russia's higher government body, on 25 November 1918. They conveyed a message of greetings from the Indian people. The author reproduces a part of this message, the full text of which is available in folio No. 1235 of the Central State Archives of October Revolution.

—The brief speech Yakov Sverdlov made in reply at the same meeting is also reproduced in part.

—On 23 November 1918 the two Indians also met Lenin (*Izvestia*, 24 November 1918).

—On 5 December 1918 they are said to have addressed a large international meeting in the Hall of Columns of Trade Union House in Moscow, where they were warmly received.

The same information comes to us from another source. This is the English translation of the text of a Proclamation of the People's Commissaries in Moscow addressed to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in Turkestan. This text was obtained by the intelligence department of the British government in India some time in 1919, and communicated to Lord Curzon. This is preserved in the National Archives of India (FPD, 1921, File No. 40-41):

—Here the two Indians are described as "Two representatives of Indian Muslims, residents of Delhi of learned professions, by name Sattar and Jabbar"

—They are said to have "presented themselves to our leader Lenin and explained him many things referring to India and the East"

—They "appeared at a meeting in the Central Executive Committee of Soviets on 25 November and asked for assistance from Soviet Russia, with a view to helping in freeing India from English servitude and also with a view of distributing through India information as to Soviets and their principles".

—Sverdloy, President of Soviet government, replied to them expressing solidarity with Indians fighting for their liberty, conveying the best wishes of the executive to them. He added that "the representatives will not be kept long here by us but allowed as quickly as possible to go to India".

—The document also gives the full text of the long message they read to the executive.

The information given by both the sources generally tally. We have not compared the translation of text of the message the two Indians read before the Central Executive as given in the National Archives version with the original Russian text as given in *Problems of Orientalology*. But comparing it with the extracts given by Anand Gupta, which have been taken from the Russian text, it seems that the National Archives text is fairly accurate. The new facts emerging from this latter document are that their names were Jabbar and Sattar who are residents of Delhi, and that they present themselves as representatives of Indian Muslims and speak firstly in the name of seven crore Muslims of India though later on they speak in general of India as a whole.

Additional information is given about them by Dr B. N. Dutta (ARI, pp. 41 and 44 and a footnote on them on pp. 180-81). This information comes in the course of the account which he gives of the efforts the Berlin Committee made between 1915 to 1916 (end) to organise Indian fighting forces for actions in the NWF Province of India. This effort did not succeed for various reasons. Though the Pashas (Young Turks) in the Turkish government were liberal minded and sympathetic towards the effort, it could not be implemented because of narrow-minded chauvinism and total inefficiency of the Turkish administration.

The German government was also not enthusiastic about the scheme and did not want to use its influence to smooth out the difficulties. Lastly there arose certain contradictions and lack of trust between the Pan-Islamic minded Muslim revolutionaries who had come in considerable number to Turkey in 1914-15 and the Berlin Committee representatives who arrived a little later to organise revolutionary work among the Indian prisoners of war. The former had an anti-Hindu bias while the latter had a mistrust of Pan-Islamism. Dr Dutta's account is strongly coloured by his mistrust and hence his additional information has to be carefully sifted. This is as follows:

— The real names of the two were Abdul Jabbar Khairy and Abdul Sattar Khairy and they belonged to an old family of Delhi. They went to Beirut in the early years of the first world war inspired by Pan-Islamism; after the fall of Turkey they went to Moscow and there they posed as communists (?). They returned from Moscow to Berlin where both of them joined the university. The younger brother (Sattar) married there and later returned to India and became a professor in Aligarh University and died before 1953. The other brother became a fakir.

Inquiries have revealed that Professor Sattar in the period of second world war was arrested by the British government not as a left but for alleged German fascist affiliation. After independence he was active in Jamat-e-Islami movement. No further information about Jabbar has been obtained. This confirms Dr Dutta's information.

This is clear from the speech of Maulana Zafar Ali in the Central Legislative Assembly on 15 November 1940 on the treatment of detenus: "He referred to the instance of one Abdus Sattar Khairi of Aligarh who had gone to Germany, spoke the German language as well as any German and had married a German wife. He was removed to Jhansi under the Defence of India Act, but his wife was better provided for in Dehra Dun than he himself" (*Indian Annual Register*, 1940, I, Mitra, Calcutta).

We have dealt with this incident at this length because on the basis of incomplete information, they have been portrayed as the "First Indian Delegation" in Moscow after the October Revolution (Anand Gupta) or as the "first Indian communists in Moscow" (P. C. Joshi, *Link*, 16 June 1968). The idea was to put the record straight. For this it is neither necessary to underestimate their courageous act to go to Soviet Russia in those difficult and early days to express solidarity with the Russian revolution and to stand up for the cause of India's struggle for freedom, nor to accuse them of narrow-minded opportunism as Dr Dutta, who came in touch with them personally, does. They were Pan-Islamists no doubt, but their patriotism and the sincerity of their desire then to fight for Indian Independence on the basis of Hindu-Muslim unity need not be doubted. They were not "a delegation" nor did they pose themselves as "communists" in Moscow as far as we can see from their speech and message which are on record. They had formed an Indian Moslem Committee in Istanbul, which in 1917 made a proposal to the German government to form some sort of Mujahid fighting force in the NWF tribal area.* This was referred to the

* *Der Neue Orient*, Vol. 2, 1917, quoted earlier, also gives the text of the message which the "Indian Moslem Committee" sent to the kaiser, when he visited Constantinople. This is also probably drafted by the same Khairy brothers, who also drafted the speech and the message they delivered in Moscow. Comparison of the two is revealing. See the texts in the documents of 1918.

Berlin Committee which rejected it (ARI, p. 181) After their return from Moscow in 1918 they faded out of national revolutionary politics and later entered into quite different politics!

The year 1919 as well as the succeeding year of 1920 are marked with contradictory developments, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary, arising from the postwar economic crisis due to the imperialist-capitalist offensive as well as the rising revolutionary upsurge under the impact of the October Revolution. In the countries of the "victorious allies" in Western Europe, there is on the one hand the capitalist-imperialist offensive of high prices and rising unemployment, and a mass strike wave coupled with a political movement of "Hands off Soviet Russia" led by revolutionary socialist and communist wing of the international working class on the other. In the countries of the "defeated central powers" the revolutionary upsurge started by the German November revolution continues to spread with workers' and soldiers' councils being formed here and there. Counter-revolution also hits back, the year 1919 opening with the dastardly murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. In Soviet Russia, on the one hand the socialist revolution is consolidating under the wise and farsighted leadership of Bolsheviks and Lenin, while the western imperialists, particularly British and French, are using their now unemployed armies to start a war of intervention in Russia to bolster up the defeated landlord and capitalist classes and through a civil war on the other.

In the international working-class movement, there were meetings of the social-democratic and labour parties in London and Berna with the object of reviving the Second International which had practically ceased to exist during the period of the first world war, as well as the emergence of revolutionary left socialist groups, organisations and communist parties in Western Europe under the impact of the victory of Bolshevik Party in Russia, culminating in the foundation of the Third (Communist) International at the world congress in Moscow in March 1919.

In India, the British imperialists are pursuing their traditional policy of the carrot and the whip. The "carrot" is the miserable dose of political reforms—the Montford scheme which is to be implemented under the firm guidance of the British. The "whip" is the Sedition Committee Report under Justice Rowlatt, which made a review of the revolutionary activities and development in the war period, compared by Lord Sydenham with 1857, and which proposed the ill-famed Rowlatt Bill, initiating a regime of draconic repression and complete suppression of elementary democratic rights and liberties. Then in India too the post-war economic crisis meant high prices, retrenchment and wage-cuts. Against this arose a wave of mass strikes of workers in the latter part of 1918 and in 1919, in Ahmedabad, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. There was growing peasant unrest and risings.

Gandhi had already entered the field of the mass movement leading the peasant struggle in Champaran and textile strike in Ahmedabad in

his own way. He now stepped on to the stage of all-India national politics. He took up the challenge of the Rowlatt Bill with the call for a countrywide protest hartal. Coming as it did against the background of rising mass unrest and struggles, the call received unprecedented response. The British sought to crush it by moving into action their engine of repression, which culminated in the Amritsar massacre and the humiliating terror regime that followed it. The movement was not crushed, it entered into its new and mass phase, with the first non-cooperation movement initiated by Gandhi later.

This is the international and national background against which we have to review the activities of Indian revolutionaries abroad, after the dissolution of the Berlin Indian Independence Committee and when most of them turned to Soviet Russia for support to our freedom movement and some became communists under the influence of the October Revolution and became founders of the Communist Party of India in Tashkent in October 1920.

We have already stated that the leaders of the Berlin Committee V. Chattopadhyaya and Dr. Dutta, had attempted to seek contact with the Soviet government leaders and the Bolshevik Party both from Stockholm and Berlin before the committee was formally dissolved. Now we find Raja Mahendra Pratap, who from 1915 to 1917 both as a member of the Berlin Committee and as the head of the "provisional government of India" was very much taken up with the contact with the German government and the Kaiser, in early 1919 in Soviet Russia and meeting Lenin at the head of quite a representative delegation. Various accounts of this meeting have appeared recently and all of them are based on the Raja's own account in his book (RE, pp. 45-46) and his subsequent interviews and letters to different persons. We want to state here the essential facts about the same to prove that this was the first representative delegation of Indian revolutionaries to contact the head of the Soviet government.

The interview took place in May 1919 and the delegation was composed of the following: Mahendra Pratap (leader), Moulavi or Professor Barakatullah, Moulavi Abdul Rab (Peshawari), M. Prativadhi Bhayankar Tirumal Acharya, Dalip Singh Gill and Ibrahim the servant of Barakatullah (Andronov, *Soviet Land*, 15 August 1967).

As the delegation represented no organised body like the Berlin Committee, now no longer in existence, we will briefly give details about each member.

Mahendra Pratap, according to his own account, was a member of the Indian National Congress before he left India. He formed the Berlin Committee in 1914. The same year he left for Kabul via Istanbul at the head of an Indo-German mission. He founded the "provisional government of India" in Kabul in 1915 and which continued up to 1922. In the latter part of 1919, when a Soviet embassy was established in Afghanistan, says the Raja, "Now Soviet embassy helped me send my ministers to further the cause of India's freedom" (FR, p. 48).

For the purpose of reference we are giving here the names of the active workers of this historic body: Mahendra Pratap (Raja), President; Barakatullah (Moulana), Premier; Obeidullah (Moulana), Home Minister; Basher (Moulavi), War Minister; Champakaraman Pillai, Foreign Minister; Shamsheer Singh alias Mathura Singh, Khuda Baksh, Mohammad Ali—Ministers Plenipotentiaries; Rahmat Ali Zakaria, Zaffar Hassan, Allah Nawaz, Harnam Singh, Gujar Singh alias Kalu Singh, Abdul Aziz, Abdul Bari and many others" (ML, p. 113).

Moulana (Professor) Barakatullah was in exile in Japan in the years 1907-14 where he taught Urdu and Persian. He was expelled from there after the outbreak of the war. He went to San Francisco. When Mahendra Pratap was proceeding on his Indo-German Mission in 1915 he called Barakatullah from America to assist him. He was prime minister in the "provisional government of India" in Kabul and remained there till 1919. He followed Mahendra Pratap to Soviet Russia in early 1919 and was present at the interview with Lenin. According to his own statement (Petrograd Pravda, No. 10, 1919) he was "not a communist or socialist but an irreconcilable enemy of European capitalism and considers communists allies in this task". He was a Pan-Islamist, edited a paper Muslim Unity in Japan. Later he joined the Berlin Committee and after 1917 became a strong supporter of Soviet Russia. At the request of Chicherin he wrote a Persian pamphlet *Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations* and explained to Muslims why they should join with Soviet Russia in their fight against British imperialism and for freedom. Chicherin also sent him to Afghanistan (1917) to introduce the Soviet ambassador to Amir Amanullah with whom he had good standing.

Maulana Abdul Rab (Peshawari) was a junior official in the British diplomatic service in Baghdad. He crossed over to Turkey when the war broke out because of his Pan-Islamist patriotic sentiments. After the end of the war he came to Kabul some time in 1918. He seems to have crossed over into Soviet Russia together with Barakatullah, before Mahendra Pratap was able to do so. This must have been at the end of 1918 or the beginning of 1919. Devendra Kaushik quoting Col Bailey's *Mission to Tashkent* says they appeared in Tashkent in March 1919. Abdul Rab was a popular orator and his speeches in various public functions in Tashkent were reported in local contemporary press and had a progressive national revolutionary content. Dr Dutta also credits him to be a nationalist in 1919-20.

Mandayam Pratiwadi Bhayankar Tirumal Acharya was a relative of Prof Rangachary of Madras Presidency College and joined the Indian revolutionary movement in Britain in 1907-8 when studying there. He was with Savarkar and later joined Chattopadhyaya and worked in the Berlin Committee in the period of the first world war. He was sent to Turkey during that period and is credited with the daring exploit of jumping into the Suez Canal to escape arrest. Dr B. N. Dutta (ARI, p. 171) who gives this information says that he went over to Kabul

with Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah, after the Berlin Committee was dissolved (1918). Acharya seems to have crossed into Soviet Russia at the end of 1918 or beginning of 1919 with Abdul Rab, together with whom he organised an "Indian Nationalist Committee" (1919-20) in Tashkent (ARI).

Dalip Singh Gill was the son of a peasant in Patiala state and his brother who was a revolutionary had been hanged. Gill himself was in America during the war from where he went to Switzerland and then to Germany, where he was put in prison. In prison he made the acquaintance of Karl Liebknecht, who after the German revolution of 1918 set him free. Through Liebknecht he came to know German and Russian communists associated with Dr Mansoor. In the beginning of 1919 he was able to go to Russia by an aeroplane and there he seems to have joined the delegation led by Mahendra Pratap. On his way back he was shot at by Polish whiteguards but managed to escape and was active in the Berlin association of Indian revolutionaries in 1922 (NAI-HPD, File No. 11, September 1920, also File No. 52, Proceedings, February 1922).

Ibrahim who is described as servant of Barakatullah was probably a Pathan, an Indian armyman and one of the war prisoners in Germany, some of whom were freed and recruited for revolutionary work. Dr Dutta mentions the fact that the Indo-German Mission headed by Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah had with them as bodyguards some Pathan soldiers of the British Indian army taken prisoners in war (ARI, p. 72). Ibrahim might be one of them.

Thus we see that every member of the first really "representative" Indian delegation that met Lenin in May 1919 was in some way or other connected with the work of the organised and representative body of Indian revolutionaries, viz the Berlin Indian Independence Committee, at some time or other. Secondly, it is on record about all of them except Ibrahim that they held progressive nationalist views and were sympathetic towards the principles and ideas of the Russian revolution; one of them, Acharya, joined the CPI formed in Tashkent, though later in life he reverted to his anarcho-syndicalist views. Thirdly, it is on record in the case of all of them except Ibrahim that they were active in the cause of Indian revolution in solidarity with Soviet Russia in some way or other after the interview.

Lenin himself attached great importance to the interview. It was coming against the background of a mighty mass upsurge of national protest and workers' and peasants' struggles against the brutal repression and ruthless exploitation by British imperialists. It is on record that Lenin had a letter sent to *Amrita Bazar Patrika* about the Amritsar massacre (April 1919) expressing solidarity with the victims and condemning the outrage. The Manifesto of the First Inaugural Congress of the Communist International mentions the great bonus strike of the Bombay textile workers in the beginning of 1919 (see documents of 1919). Lenin called for Mahendra Pratap's pamphlet *Religion of Love*

on the day previous to the interview and read through it. Mahendra Pratap describes how Lenin showed great respect for him as the leader of the delegation and had something to say to every member of the same and also to Ibrahim! Lenin told Mahendra Pratap that his book was "Tolstoyism". Dr Dutta records that Lenin told Mahendra Pratap in this connection the following:

"In our country too Tolstoy and others tried for the emancipation of the people by propagating religion, but nothing came of it. So after returning to India you propagate class struggle, that will clear the path of liberation" (ARi, p. 118).

This first meeting of the leader of the socialist revolution and the head of the Soviet government with a more or less representative section of Indian revolutionaries abroad was fruitful. It led to twofold developments in the latter part of 1919 and in 1920—firstly, a decisive part of Indian revolutionaries abroad, both from Western Europe and Turkey as well as those from the USA, turned to the victorious socialist revolution in Russia and to Soviet Russia as their firm ally in the struggle for independence; secondly, the formation of the CPI in Tashkent in October 1920 by a section of Indian revolutionaries and of young Muhajirs.

Let us recount these developments in chronological order and in bare outline as a background to understand the documents of the year 1920.

An immediate outcome of this meeting, Mahendra Pratap relates, was that the Soviet foreign office decided that he should accompany the new Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan to facilitate the latter's introduction to Amanullah (RE, p. 47). This fact has not been checked up from Soviet sources. Amanullah came to power on 28 February 1919 and declared Afghanistan independent, throwing off British tutelage. On 27 March Soviet Russia, then RSFSR, recognised Afghanistan's independence. In May-June 1919 Britain declared war on Afghanistan and the third Anglo-Afghan war began. The name of the Soviet ambassador being sent, says Mahendra Pratap, was Souritz and Barakatullah and Vosnesensky came to the station to see them off. This is not an unbelievable story, especially when we read in M. N. Roy's *Memoirs* (pp. 326-27) that in the beginning of 1920, before the second Congress of the CI, the idea was mooted by Borodin and Karakhan that he could be sent as Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan, and that "I was, of course, simply fascinated. The innumerable technical difficulties were not realised until Chicherin pointed them out" (RM, p. 327). This needs being checked up, but this does show the relationship of trust and friendship between Indian revolutionaries and top Soviet leadership.

At that time most of the Russian diplomatic representatives abroad refused to serve the Soviet government. on 9 December 1917 they were dismissed by an order of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. "In several countries the Soviet government (from 1918 to 1921) appointed local citizens to carry out consular functions. In Britain, for

Instance, the noted trade unionist, John McLean, was appointed honorary consul of Soviet Russia in Glasgow. In Stockholm F. Strom performed the same duties. In the first months after the revolution the Soviet government invested John Reed with the duties of honorary consul in the United States" (*Soviet Foreign Policy: Early Years*, M. Trush, Moscow, pp. 67-68).

Barakatullah, Abdul Rab and Acharya seem to have remained in Soviet Russia through the rest of 1919. We have referred to a statement of Barakatullah in the Soviet press in 1919 on "Afghanistan and India" (for full text see documents of 1919). We have also referred to a pamphlet in Persian written by him at the request of Chicherin. This is probably the booklet *Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations* published in Tashkent in early 1919, the English translation of which is preserved in the National Archives of India. We have reproduced in full the concluding portion of this pamphlet in the documents and in the introductory note to the same traced the subsequent career of Barakatullah which shows that he remained to the last with Indian revolutionaries and in touch with Soviet leaders.

Abdul Rab and Acharya seem to have remained in Soviet Russia for the best part of 1919, 1920 and up to 1921. They seem to have become communists in 1919. Acharya joined the CPI later in 1920 when it was formed in Tashkent, but Abdul Rab did not. We hear of both of them as active in Kabul in the beginning of 1920. We have the statement of Mohammad Shafiq, the earliest Muhajir to go to Russia in July 1919, that Abdul Rab and Acharya were actively propagating that the Muhajirs should go over to Soviet Russia, where they will be well received and get political education. As Shafiq says, it was through the persuasion of these two that he and his batch of three or four crossed over into Soviet Russia and reached Tashkent in January or February 1920. He also says that these two came a little later to Tashkent at the head of a bigger batch of some 30 Muhajirs.

Devendra Kaushik says that Abdul Rab was politically active in Soviet Central Asia in 1919-20. He was a popular orator and his speeches at various functions were widely reported in local Russian and Uzbek press (e.g. *Izvestia Turk Tsarka* and *Istraklat*). He also says that Abdul Rab is spoken of in the Soviet press of those years as the President of the Association of Indian Revolutionaries. It is probable that Abdul Rab got another opportunity of meeting Lenin, when he seems to have furnished Lenin with a list of authoritative books on the Indian national movement. This list contained the names of the works of Tagore, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo, Gandhi, Tilak, etc.

Let us sum up the story of Abdul Rab Peshawari and M.P.B.T. Acharya to bring out their relation with the formation of the CPI in Tashkent in October 1920 and also to throw light on the contradiction that developed between these two and M. N. Roy and Abanl Mukherji who arrived on the scene a little later. Firstly, Rab and Acharya both belong to the older generation of Indian revolutionaries abroad. Both of them

were for the entire period of the first world war abroad and active under the Berlin Committee led by Chattopadhyaya both in Germany and Turkey. M. N. Roy mentions Rab as "a gray-bearded Maulana" (RM, p. 464) and Acharya had worked with Chatto even before the first world war. Roy recalls that Lenin, when he met him first, remarked, "You are so young! I expected a gray-bearded wise man from the East." Abani was also of about the same age as Roy.

Secondly, Dr Dutta mentions the following facts (ARI, p. 192): Rab and Acharya formed a National Revolutionary Committee in Tashkent with the Muhajirs who began to arrive in Tashkent—first a small batch with Mohammad Shafiq in the beginning of 1920 and a bigger batch a little later. They came into conflict with Roy and Abani who arrived in Tashkent from Moscow after the Second Congress of the CI. This conflict was later referred for solution to the Little Bureau of the ECCI towards the end of 1920 or beginning of 1921. This conflict is also referred to in the papers of the Tashkent CPI formation. Mohammad Shafiq (of the first batch) and Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed (of the second batch) have referred to this conflict in their respective statements. M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* gives a more detailed account of the same.

Roy says that both Rab and Acharya called themselves communists. He refers to them as "Rab-Acharya group." He says that Rab and Acharya "fanned the communist fanaticism" of Muhajirs and caused them to raise the demand to form a CPI in Tashkent. Roy, who was at first opposed to this, later agreed and a CPI was organised and "an intelligent and fairly educated young man named Mohammad Shafiq, who had come with the Acharya group, was elected secretary of the party" (MR, pp. 464-65).

We get the early history of Mohammad Shafiq from his own statement before the inquiry magistrate when he was prosecuted in one of the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases in 1923-24. This statement is quoted by the sessions judge who tried and sentenced him under Sec. 121-A IPC to three years' rigorous imprisonment on 4 April 1924. He was in one of the earliest Muhajir batches which reached Kabul in May 1919. When Obaidullah Sindhi and his party reached Kabul a little later, he joined them. Still later, when Abdul Rab and Acharya came to Kabul from Soviet Russia in the beginning of 1920, Shafiq and his companions left for Tashkent, having heard from them that the Russian government was prepared to help the Muhajirs who desire to fight for the freedom of India from the British yoke. Two months after his arrival in Tashkent Shafiq edited a paper in Persian and Urdu called *Zamindar* (The Peasant), an English translation of which is included in the documents here. Only one issue of *Zamindar* appeared.

Shafiq says that three months after their arrival in Tashkent (April-May 1920) Rab and Acharya arrived from Kabul with some 30 other Muhajirs. At this time the general Hifrat movement had started. But the bigger batch, which included Shaukat Usmani, Rafiq Ahmed, Abdul

Majid, Ghaus Rahaman, Fazi Ilahi Qurban, Ferozuddin Mansoor and Akbar Khan Qureshi, reached Tashkent much later in October-November 1920.

Shafiq says he left with Acharya for Moscow where the Second Congress of the Comintern was meeting. According to his account Acharya, Abani and Roy were delegates at the congress while he attended the same on a visitor's card. This latter fact has not been checked up. After the congress he returned to Tashkent together with M. N. Roy, Abani Mukherji and Acharya, where the Military School was organised under the leadership of Roy mainly for the bigger batch of Muhajirs. He was elected the secretary of the CPI formed there in October 1920.

When the school was wound up in the summer of 1921, he shifted to Moscow together with the other students of the school and joined the Communist University for the Eastern Peoples and studied there for one year. When he returned to India in the beginning of 1923 he surrendered to the police, made a statement to them and prayed for mercy. The sessions judge remarked that he had "returned to India in a chastened mood".

M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji, belonging to the younger generation of Indian revolutionaries, arrived in Berlin at the end of 1919 and the beginning of 1920 respectively. Berlin at that time was the concentration-point for Indian revolutionaries abroad—the threshold of the new emerging cohort of world revolution. The new arrivals differed from their older colleagues of the Berlin Committee in this that they, as individuals and as a result of the background of their recent experience, had already made up their minds about seeking the aid of Bolshevik Russia and the Communist International for India's freedom struggle. Roy was already a full-fledged communist. He was coming to Berlin on the invitation of Lenin and was also the delegate elected by the extraordinary conference of the Socialist Party of Mexico, which had taken the decision to convert itself into a Communist Party and send him to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International meeting in Moscow in July 1920.

Abani Mukherji's credentials and commitment to communism at that time were of a far lesser order than those of Roy. But Roy himself records that when Abani contacted him in Berlin, he was armed with the credentials of the West European Bureau of the International then stationed in Holland and headed by Rutgers. Roy was prejudiced against Abani from the very beginning. This is clear from the chapter in his *Memoirs* devoted to Abani's appearance in Berlin ("An Embarrassing Associate", RM, pp. 295-301). But even here Roy says: "He was the first Indian communist I met" (p. 297). Both M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji played an important role in the formation of the party in Tashkent and in the subsequent years of its formation in India; Roy's role being far more important than that of Abani.

The story of the transformation of "Narendra Bhattacharya"—the daring job-doer of the Indian Revolutionary Party in period of the first

world war—to "M. N. Roy" the communist revolutionary who came to occupy a key and responsible position in the Communist International up to 1927 has been told by himself in his *Memoirs*. It is a remarkable record of a talented anti-Imperialist revolutionary who won the recognition of Lenin, but which went so much to his head that he was unable to learn either from the wise correctives of the leaders of world revolution or from life. This landed him into deviations and mistakes which proved his own undoing, and did great harm to the movement. But this should not prevent us from a positive appraisal of the role he played and the contribution he made in the early years of the formation of the party.

Roy himself gives a sketchy account of his career as a link between the Indian revolutionary groups in India and the Berlin Committee. It seems that in 1915 he made three unsuccessful attempts to import arms, which the Germans were to deliver in various neutral ports in South-East Asia. Then he went to Japan where he contacted Rash Behari Bose and also Sun Yat-sen. In the beginning of 1916 he contacted the German consulate in Peking but even there he drew a blank. He was asked to contact the German headquarters in Berlin and was helped by the Germans to go to the USA via Japan and equipped him with a French-Indian passport under the pseudonym of Martin.

In the summer of 1916 he arrived in San Francisco and in autumn of the same year he came to New York where he remained with Lala Lalpat Rai for nearly a year. The "Punjab Kesari" was then lecturing in the north American universities, trying to win support for the cause of India's independence struggle. This support came mostly from the progressives and socialists and thus socialism came in for discussion in these meetings as a perspective for free India. This is where Roy came in touch with socialist ideas and made his first acquaintance with the works of Karl Marx. Here he seems to have made good contacts with socialist oriented intellectuals and university professors.

In June 1917, when USA joined the war, German agents and Indian revolutionaries were arrested. Roy was also arrested for a short while but later enlarged on bail. He jumped the bail and escaped to Mexico, but managed to get a letter of introduction from the President of Stanford University to General Alvarado, who was then the governor of an outlying province of Mexico and also a socialist. Roy's stay in Mexico from mid-1917 to the end of 1919, when that country was going through its war and postwar anti-Imperialist and socialist upsurge, brings him remarkable achievements, opportunities and rich political experience. He became in the course of the developments of these years not only a committed communist but was able to leave Mexico as a delegate to the Second Congress of the CI meeting in Moscow in the summer of 1920.

It will be useful to catalogue these developments chronologically for record.

During 1917 Roy learned to speak and write Spanish—translated into

Spanish his own longish essay written in San Francisco, where he first imbibed internationalist and materialist ideas, *Way to Durable World Peace*. Here he had propounded the idea that stable peace is possible only by conceding the right of national self-determination to oppressed nations. Then he added a long chapter on the exposure of the Monroe doctrine, to make the essay topical for Mexicans and the whole was published in Spanish as a booklet—with the same title.

In 1917 he was contacted by the Germans through their embassy in Mexico and a large sum of gold (50,000 pesos) was made available to him for buying arms to be sent to India. He tried to go to China for the purpose but missed the boat and thereafter the money remained with him, which he used to finance his political activities in Mexico and up to the time he reached Berlin at the end of 1919.

During the whole of 1918 and 1919 he edited the English section of *Herald*, a bourgeois popular daily. During this time (1918) he came into touch with the Socialist Party of Mexico, participated in its political activities.

In December 1918 the First Conference of the Socialist Party of Mexico was held and he was elected its general secretary. By this time he was well connected with the ruling circles in Mexico.

In the summer of 1919 Michael Borodin, sent by Lenin and the Soviet government for a specific job, is stranded in Mexico, contacts Roy who was able to give him shelter and restore his contact with Moscow through Mexican diplomatic channels. Contact with Borodin completes Roy's communist training and commitment.

In the autumn of 1919, the extraordinary conference of the Socialist Party of Mexico takes place and, under the influence of Borodin, decides to convert itself into the CP of Mexico and seek affiliation to the CI. Roy was elected as a delegate to the coming Second Congress of the CI. When the report of the conference reached Moscow, a message was received recalling Borodin immediately and inviting Roy to attend the congress.

Early in November 1919 Roy left Mexico by boat, landed in Spain where he contacts communists and reaches Berlin in December 1919. Borodin reached Berlin about the same time by another route. Roy must have remained in Berlin from December 1919 to the end of April 1920, because he says that he addressed the May Day rally in Moscow in 1920 (MR, p. 350). His first meeting with Lenin must have been in June 1920 because just before this meeting Roy was given the English translation of Lenin's preliminary draft theses on the National and Colonial Question, meant for the forthcoming Second Congress, and this draft is dated 5 June 1920. This brings the story of M. N. Roy up to the point of his participation in the work of the Second Congress of CI which adopted the famous Theses of Lenin on the National and Colonial Question and also the Supplementary Theses of Roy on the same question, as amended by Lenin.

Abaninath Mukhopadhyaya, or Abani Mukherji as he is better known,

belonged like M. N. Roy to the younger generation of Indian revolutionaries. He also arrived in Berlin at the beginning of 1920, and was at that time already a committed communist—a fact admitted by Roy himself. He went to Moscow about the same time as Roy and was admitted as a delegate to the Second Congress together with Acharya, though without a decisive vote. He also played a role in the formation of the party in Tashkent and later in the early years of its formation in India itself—though not as outstanding as that played by Roy.

Young Abani left for Japan at the age of 15 for getting training in textile technology. Thereafter he seems to have got opportunity to go to Germany to complete and perfect his technological education. In 1912 when he returned he was sufficiently equipped with theoretical and practical education in textile technology to take on a job in an Ahmedabad textile mill and later a teaching job in the same field in the Prem Mahavidyalaya, Vrindaban, founded by Mahendra Pratap.

Like many a talented and sensitive Bengali youth of those days, Abani had imbibed the spirit of patriotism and admiration for Bengal's revolutionary movement from the famous Sakham Ganesh Deuskar, who then lived in their house and whose *Deshar Katha* had inspired thousands of Bengali youth. As a young man, working for his livelihood, Abani seems to have strengthened his contacts with the leaders of the Bengal revolutionary movement between 1912 and 1915, though he does not seem to have joined the same as a whole-timer or member. "I was not a partyman", he told Dr Dutta (ARI, p. 174).

But when the revolutionary leader Jatindranath Mukhopadhyaya asked him in 1915 to go to Tokyo to contact Rash Behari Bose with an urgent message, he readily accepted and that was the beginning of his active revolutionary and political career. That was the time when after the collapse of the *Komagata Maru* uprising Rash Behari Bose had escaped to Japan and the movement was striving for recovery after the setback. After Abani's arrival in Tokyo, he accompanied Rash Behari Bose to Shanghai where they were engaged in some other work. Here an urgent message was received from Jatindranath, and Rash Behari decided to send Abani back to India with a reply.

It was on his way back that he was arrested in Singapore by the British police, and 35 names of Indian contacts given by Rash Behari fell into the hands of the police (ARI, p. 22). This arrest and its sequel on the one hand brings again a new turningpoint in his career, enabling him to become a communist as a result of his two-year stay in Sumatra after his escape to that place from Singapore. On the other hand, the subsequent developments after his arrest in Singapore have created a cloud of suspicion round his career, which acted as a handicap for him for some time later. Though later investigation had cleared him of this suspicion to the satisfaction of all unbiased observers, Roy and Muzaffar Ahmad, who had a deep prejudice against Abani from the very beginning, have continued to exploit the same in their respective memoirs, the latter far more viciously than the former.

machinery was not able to trap Abani years later when the latter was moving underground in India from 1922 to 1924.

But the Singapore authorities who had released Shiv Prasad Gupta who was arrested together with Abani in 1915 after seven days (ARI, p. 174) and kept the latter in jail for over a year but had got precious little from his statements. So they kept him under police vigilance in Singapore to watch his movements and contacts and get more information—the usual police tactics. So Dr Dutta's conclusion quoted above seems to be nearer the truth—Abani slipped the police vigilance by swimming away from the Singapore beach while on parole.

Abani escaped to Java towards the end of 1916, that means he spent nearly two and a half years in what is today Indonesia. This period in Abani's life corresponds in time and duration with the period that Roy spent in Mexico after his escape from the USA by jumping bail in mid-1917. It is in this period that Abani came into contact with Indonesian revolutionaries who were becoming communists under the impact of the October Revolution and was able to go to Holland with their help in 1919, with credentials which were weighty enough to convince Rutgers, the comrade in Holland in charge of the Regional Bureau of the CI, that Abani is a fit person to be helped to proceed to Moscow to attend the Second Congress of the CI as a delegate without vote.

Roy to whom Abani seems to have given an account of his stay in Indonesia gives us this version: "There (in Indonesia) he (Abani) changed his name to Dr Shaheer in order to pass as a Malay and contacted some revolutionaries who had heard of the Russian revolution and been influenced by the message of communism. It appealed to Mukherji also, to the extent of inducing him to abandon the idea of returning home, and start on an adventurous journey to the land of revolution. Employed as a steward on a Dutch ship, he reached Holland and saw Rutgers with the letter of introduction from common friends in Java" (RM, pp. 296-97).

This is the account Abani seems to have given to Roy when the former contacted him, end of 1919, with a letter from Rutgers. Roy finds the report "hardly convincing", discourages him from the idea of proceeding to Soviet Russia and sends him back to Holland. Later Roy was surprised when he found Abani turning up in Moscow in the beginning of 1920 with a mandate of delegate without vote to attend the Second Congress of the CI. This means Rutgers had made a different appraisal of Abani on the basis of the credentials he had got from Indonesia. Rutgers headed the bureau which was specially set up to make arrangements to check up and forward delegates arriving to participate in the Second Congress. Roy writes: "He (Abani) brought for me a letter from Rutgers who wrote that Dr Shaheer was extremely eager, and the Bureau did not think it would be wise to disappoint him; however, a larger number of delegates from Asia would enhance the international character of the Congress. As I was a delegate from Mexico, he was admitted as the sole Indian delegate; together with others of a similar

status, individuals not representing any organisations, he was entitled to participate fully in all discussions but not to vote" (RM, p. 298).

This is correct. In the protocols of the Second Congress (Russian official edition) in the list of delegates Roy is mentioned a delegate from the CP of Mexico with a decisive vote, while Abani Mukherji and M.P.B.T. Acharya are mentioned as delegates from British India with consultative vote. But in the column "organisation represented" against the name of both Abani and Acharya there is a question mark.

Another revolutionary of the younger generation who arrived in Berlin at the end of 1920 is Nalini Gupta. Though his work and role in the early years of the formation did not begin in 1920 but in the next year, it is useful to record his early history here. Dr Bhupendranath Dutta, whom Nalini contacted in Berlin towards the end of 1920, gives his early history as follows:

His real name is Nalini Bhushan Das Gupta. He came to England in the first year of the first world war and after knocking about got employment in an armament factory. He had received a leg injury due to an accident. He wanted further treatment in Germany which, Dr Dutta says, he arranged; he was about seven months in hospital in Berlin.

In a statement he made to the police in 1923 when arrested prior to his prosecution in the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case, he stated that he was retrenched from service in England in 1918 after the war ended. He told Dr Dutta that he was not allowed to return to India by the British government because of his expert knowledge in the explosive technique. He carried with him a recommendation from Rabindranath Tagore, which the poet later told Dr Dutta was an ordinary type of recommendation. Nalini told Dutta that Tagore had asked him to seek his fortune in Soviet Russia and he wanted to go there.

Later, when the delegation of Indian revolutionaries of the former Berlin Committee went to Moscow in the spring of 1921, at the invitation of Soviet leaders, Dr Dutta says, he took Nalini along with him. This tallies with the statement he made to the police. He says he reached Moscow in May 1921 together with Luhani. This much about Nalini here. We mentioned him here because together with Abani, Nalini also plays a considerable role as the main link and contact of Roy in India.

Describing the earliest efforts of Indian revolutionaries abroad and their representative bodies to contact Soviet Russia and Bolshevik leaders, we have referred to a manifesto issued by the Stockholm branch of the Berlin Committee to the Petrograd Soviet some time between February and November 1917. It is necessary to place on record here some other earlier efforts. The sources of the knowledge of these earlier efforts are—the manuscripts of memoirs of Virendranath Chattopadhyaya available with Mrs Karunovskaya in Leningrad and the microfilm record of the foreign office files of the German government of the period of the first world war dealing with Indian revolutionaries (available in National Archives of India).

Dr Horst Kruger who has studied these sources has brought to light

the following facts in the paper he read in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library on 13 March 1970. He quotes an unpublished speech of Chattopadhyaya in which the latter states, "When I arrived at Stockholm in the beginning of May (17 May 1917 — H K) I found there a strong international emigre delegation and I asked whether Lenin was still in Stockholm. I was deeply disappointed that I did not meet him."

This statement of Chattopadhyaya fits in with the facts about the Stockholm branch we have referred to earlier and their contacts with Troyansky—which we have given on the authority of Dr Bhupendranath Dutta. Another interesting fact comes out from the German record (the microfilm referred to earlier). "In the beginning of 1918 Chattopadhyaya received an invitation from the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs to visit Petrograd. At first the German foreign office was in favour of his going but in February 1918 it decided against this proposal" (Dr Kruger, *ibid.*) This attitude of the German government made Chattopadhyaya comment as follows in a letter to his Berlin comrades: "It is really a question whether the German government looks upon us as sincere patriots or merely as tools and pawns and temporary paid agents."

Thus we see that Indian revolutionaries began to get disillusioned with the German government by 1917-18 and began turning towards and making contacts with the leaders of the victorious Bolshevik revolution and the Soviet government. The German government also began suspecting this attitude of Indian revolutionaries. Dr Kruger quotes the anxious German statement (microfilm record) that the Indian patriots might arrive at the conclusion that "Indians could expect more by the realisation of the Bolshevik revolutionary ideals in the whole world including England than from Germany".

That such contradictions should arise between the Imperial German government and Indian revolutionaries between whom a convenient alliance existed in the period of the first world war is quite natural. Besides we have already referred to the pronounced socialist orientation of Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin Committee emphasised, by Dr Bhupendranath Dutta. That Indian revolutionaries were also disillusioned with the socialists of the West European countries and even with those of the left variety who were holding peace conferences in neutral countries towards the end of the war is clear especially from the manifesto of the Stockholm Committee to the Petrograd Soviet quoted above. These socialists were not taking up the question of the self-determination of the oppressed nations, as the Bolsheviks of Russia, who had not yet come to power, were doing. Kaiser's government may have prevented Chattopadhyaya from accepting the invitation of the Bolsheviks in February 1918. That, however, did not prevent the Stockholm Committee from contacting Trotsky at the time of Brest-Litovsk negotiations (March 1918) and asking him to raise there the question of self-determination of India and Egypt.

After the victory of the revolution in Germany (November 1918) and

the fall of the kaiser, when Joffe was the Soviet ambassador in Berlin. Dr Dutta records that the Berlin Committee was able to establish contact with the Soviet embassy (which had been set up in April 1918) and a possibility of a representative of the Berlin Committee going officially to Soviet Russia arose. But soon after, a wave of counter-revolution in Germany came and the ambassador of the Soviet Russia was expelled. At that time Joffe was willing to take a representative of the Indian revolutionaries with him but the committee at that time could not spare anybody. That was Berlin Committee's last effort to contact the Bolsheviks, records Dr Dutta (ARI, p. 247).

We have already described the events of 1919, viz the meeting of Mahendra Pratap and his party with Lenin (May 1919), the activities of Barakatullah, Acharya and Abdul Rab, who were in that meeting and who remained in Soviet Russia for the best part of 1919. Of these Barakatullah and Acharya were outstanding members of the Berlin Committee and close collaborators of Chattopadhyaya, who was its acknowledged leader and organiser. But these were there in their individual capacity.

At the end of 1919 preparations were afoot to receive and pilot delegates from the communist and revolutionary working class organisations of the various countries of the world for the Second Congress of the Communist International which was to meet in the autumn 1920. At Amsterdam an organisation was set up which was headed by Rutgers for this purpose.

M. N. Roy and Evelyn Roy had arrived in Berlin with a mandate from the newly formed Mexican Communist Party to represent the same at the Second Congress of the CI. Abani Mukherji, who had arrived from Indonesia with strong recommendations from the emerging communist group there which was in close touch with the Dutch communists, was enabled by Rutgers to go over to Moscow and he was allowed as a delegate from British India without vote. Acharya who had declared himself communist at the time (1919) and who was instrumental in persuading the earliest Muhajir batch headed by Shafiq to go over to Soviet Russia etc was also made a delegate without vote from British India.

It is well known that Lenin was very keen that the Second Congress of the CI, which was going to discuss the national and colonial question and the struggle for liberation of the oppressed nations of the East, should be attended by as many delegates from the revolutionary organisations of these countries as possible. Question arises why efforts were not made to get proper representatives of Indian revolutionaries in Berlin to attend the congress as observers? It is true that the Berlin Committee was being wound up in the old form; but it is also true that some of its farsighted leaders were thinking in terms of reorganising the work for the new period of great revolutionary possibilities opened by the socialist revolution in Russia. Of course there

were people in that committee who had even then bourgeois-infected anti-Bolshevik prejudices but they were an insignificant minority. But if a delegation representative of the Berlin-Stockholm committees as they existed then could have attended the Second Congress of the CI in the capacity of observers or delegates without vote, the complications which arose a year later could have been avoided or solved more easily.

At that time, beginning of 1920, no CPI was formed either in India or at Tashkent. M. N. Roy was the only communist, in the sense of being a member of a Communist Party—but that was of Mexico. He had already acquired a deep understanding in communism, because of his staying together with Borodin and working with him in the Mexican Socialist Party for one year. Besides it was because of this joint work that the Mexican party had become communist at its special congress which had elected Roy as a delegate to the coming Second Congress. Abani's grounding as a communist at that time was next to that of Roy but perhaps not yet so deep. In the case of Acharya, who was in Soviet Russia since 1919 and was declaring himself a communist, his understanding of communism was not perhaps as deep and could have compared with that of Barakatullah, Chattopadhyaya or Dr Bhupendranath Dutta, though they were not declaring themselves as communists then. If Acharya could be a delegate without vote at the Second Congress there was no reason why Chattopadhyaya, Dr Bhupendranath Dutta and Barakatullah, who together with Acharya were leading members of the Berlin Committee and Stockholm Committee of Indian revolutionaries abroad, could not have been taken on the same basis.

Thus if Chatto and others were there with Acharya they would have represented the Indian revolutionary committee abroad, which had links with the revolutionary groups and parties in India, while Abani and Roy would have represented individual communists as far as India was concerned.

There were a number of questions arising then which were to become a subject of bitter controversy between the Indian revolutionary committee on the one hand and Roy and Abani on the other. These questions were: How was the Communist International to render support and assistance to India's liberation struggle? Through a broad front of India's anti-imperialist revolutionaries or through the CP of India? What was to be the relation between the Communist Party and the broad anti-imperialist revolutionary front? There was also the specific problem which arose in September 1920 or thereabouts after the Second Congress was over, when news came of hundreds of Khilafatists and Muhajirs having crossed over into Soviet Russia.

Though Pan-Islamist in ideology, these young Muhajir Indians were patriots. They were part of the mass upsurge which was welling up in India in 1920, on the basis of the national demands, righting the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, restoring democratic rights and granting swaraj to India—which Gandhiji and the National Congress had raised and for which a nationwide nonviolent noncooperation movement was

What we have written so far should serve as a background for the documents and events of 1919 and partly for those of 1920; but it is necessary to go into the events and developments of 1920 both nationally and internationally to complete the background for the documents of 1920.

In the 12 months, from the Amritsar session of the National Congress (December 1919) to the Nagpur session (December 1920) the Indian political scene went through a complete transformation. In 1919 Gandhiji had given a call for countrywide satyagraha in protest against the Rowlatt Bills which initiated a regime of repression and suppression of whatever little democratic rights that existed in the country. British imperialists had hit back with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on the one hand and the miserable carrot of Montford Reforms on the other. The country was not cowed down, a spontaneous wave of economic strikes of the working class, the like of which the country had never seen before, was steadily rising. The rising postwar unrest and discontent of the urban and rural masses was becoming articulate under Gandhiji's slogan of satyagraha. But the Amritsar session of the Congress was unable to give a fighting lead to the masses. It was bogged down in the discussions on the Montford Reform scheme—how to reject it and how to carry the fight against it on the constitutional and agitational plane.

Tilak was present at the session—it was the last Congress session he attended; he was not the fighting petrel of 1908 but the cautious tactician of postwar years. Gandhiji spoke of satyagraha against the Punjab wrongs and for democratic rights, but had no fighting slogan to give against the Montford scheme. And Gandhiji was not interested in any scheme of administrative reforms either. He was yet experimenting and probing to develop his idea of a countrywide satyagraha and non-cooperation movement. Thus the Amritsar session gave no lead of countrywide struggle for swaraj. It came one year later at the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress at the end of December 1920.

The Nagpur session ratified the decision adopted at the special session of the Congress held in Calcutta in September 1920, the decision to launch a noncooperation movement for the national demands, viz the righting of Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and the attainment of swaraj. It adopted the creed of the Congress—namely the "attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means". "Swaraj" was of course not defined but the new creed was a negation of the old liberal creed, "Dominion status within the empire by constitutional and legal means". The Nagpur session authorised Gandhiji to initiate and lead the noncooperation movement. Gandhiji later said of the Nagpur session that his real entry into the Congress was at that session. The struggle that followed transformed the Congress and ushered in a new stage in the national independence struggle despite the setback it suffered because of Gandhiji's withdrawal of the same after the Chauri Chaura incidents.

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about to be launched in this connection the problem arose: could not the Muhajirs be given military training and an Indian fighting force formed on their basis which could launch armed activities in NW frontier area to coincide and cooperate with national movement rising inside the country?

If representatives of the Indian revolutionary committee were associated with the consideration of these problems from the beginning, i.e. from the time of the Second Congress itself, then certain contradictions which arose between Indian revolutionaries and those among them who became communists could have been avoided. Later to solve these differences a big delegation of the Indian revolutionary committee, reconstructed for the purpose, did come to Moscow in the early months of 1921 and joint consultations went on for months. These negotiations failed Indian revolutionaries left Moscow some time in the middle of 1921. We will come to this later. The point to make here is that there was no objective basis for any contradictions between the Indian national revolutionaries and those among them who became communists. On the other hand, anti-imperialist revolutionary movement for independence must have been the basis of their unity. In fact some of the farsighted revolutionaries realised this even then. For instance, Dr Bhupendranath Dutta has written as follows:

"This new revolution (October Revolution—G.A.) in Russia created a stir in the hearts of leftwing Indian revolutionaries. Those who were turning to Moscow called a conference in Stockholm to decide their course of action in 1920. At this conference were present the author (Dr B. N. Dutta—G.A.), Pandurang Khankhoie who was called from Iran, as well as Virendranath Das Gupta and Vishwamitra—a student in Denmark. It was decided after consultation that those who were nationalists should remain so and establish their own association, while those who were of left, i.e. communist, persuasion should set up their own organisation separately and work through it. But all parties should work jointly for India's independence. This line of action was also sent to the Ghadar Party in America. The expenses of this conference were borne by the Swedish communist leaders. They said they could do nothing from here but when they go to Moscow they would make some arrangement. That is why it was decided to send Chattopadhyaya to Moscow. Before that Chattopadhyaya had received an invitation from M. N. Roy to go to Moscow" (ARI, p. 256).

This is a very sober and farsighted statement. This shows that representatives of the reconstituted revolutionary committee could have been present at the time of the Second Congress of the Comintern, together with Roy, Abani and Acharya. If this had happened and if these three questions we mentioned earlier could have been jointly discussed and joint work undertaken in the spirit of what Dr Bhupendranath Dutta has written, then many contradictions and suspicions which arose abroad in the early years between nationalist revolutionaries and those among them who became communists could have been avoided.

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One of the most significant developments during 1920 which led to

the historic Nagpur decision initiating the first NCO movement was the unprecedented upsurge of Hindu-Muslim unity, consequent of the Khilafat agitation and its support by Gandhiji and later by the entire country and the National Congress.

Indian Muslims were deeply agitated over the postwar events in Turkey, the dismemberment and occupation of that Islamic state by British imperialists after the defeat of Germany and the central powers which she had joined in India both among Muslims and Hindus the religious aspect of the question dominated. The dismemberment of Turkey meant the end of the sovereignty of the sultan of Turkey over Mecca and Medina—the holy places of the Mohammedans, i.e. end of this authority of Khalifa of these places.

In Turkey itself these developments led to an anti-imperialist national independence movement. After the signing of the armistice on 31 October 1918, the Turkish army was demobilised, the navy was taken over by the allies and their troops occupied the entire region of the Turkish state. The sultan of Turkey submitted to the diktat of Versailles (1919) which legalised the above measures.

This gave rise to a strong national mass movement and a peasant partisan warfare against Imperialist intruders also broke out in some parts. An elected National Assembly, as an organ of the national movement, held its session in Constantinople in January 1920 and adopted a national covenant demanding complete independence. In March 1920 British troops occupied Constantinople and forcibly dissolved the National Assembly and tried to arrest its leaders.

In April 1920 the Great National Assembly reassembled in Ankara, proclaimed itself the sole representative of the Turkish people and elected Mustafa Kemal Pasha as its president. At the end of April 1920 the government of Great National Assembly headed by Kemal Pasha turned to Lenin and Soviet Russia for recognition and a treaty of friendship and alliance.

But the government of the sultan in Turkey in Istanbul signed the peace treaty of Sevres (18 August 1920) which set the seal on the diktat of Versailles. Turkey was reduced to Anatolia and Istanbul. The straits of Dardanelles, the armed forces and the finances of Turkey came under the control of Imperialist powers.

The Great National Assembly rejected the treaty and later on 20 January 1921 it adopted a constitution taking over legislative and executive functions. In March 1921 Soviet-Turkish Fraternal Treaty was signed; this brought Soviet support to Turkish independence struggle, several loans for the government and arms for Turkish liberation army. Border questions between the two countries were amicably solved. In November 1922 the National Assembly took the decision to end the sultanate.

Thus the movement in Turkey in the early twenties, when only its Khilafat aspect was being put forward in India, was a strictly secular, national popular movement for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Turkey proper. It was a typically bourgeois nationalist

anti-imperialist movement. The movement forced the imperialists later in July 1923, when the peace treaty of Lausanne was signed, to recognise the sovereignty of Turkey, demilitarise the straits and free the same for commercial traffic and restore Turkish territories. This character of the movement is further proved by subsequent events. On 23 October 1923 Turkey was proclaimed a republic with Kemal Pasha as its first president. Kemal, of course, suppressed the revolutionary peasant movement, banned the Communist Party and allowed the continued exploitation of workers. But he consolidated the friendly relations with Soviet Russia, which had rendered invaluable help to Turkey's fight for independence. In March 1924 Khilafat itself was abolished. This was enshrined in the new reformed constitution adopted later which separated the church from the state, introduced international calendar, modern civil law, and the Latin alphabet.

We have recounted these facts at some length to show that the Khilafat agitation in India in 1920 emphasised the religious aspect, which in Turkey itself was soon left behind and the movement developed as an anti-imperialist national movement for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Turkish nation.

Solidarity with Turkish movement was quite correct and a noble thing, but to stress the Khilafatist and religious aspect of it when it was becoming outdated in Turkey itself and not to bring before the people the anti-imperialist, national and democratic aspect of the movement was a fatal mistake of the national leadership. That brought in a built-in weakness in the grand mass upsurge of Hindu-Muslim unity which began in 1920 and welled forth in the early twenties. That was why it became shortlived. Hindu-Muslim unity had to be based on the national and democratic demands of the country, on the demands of the working people against imperialist and feudal exploitation. It is in this common democratic movement for these demands that a unity of the masses, of the working people, is forged, irrespective of religion, race or caste. Working class movement in India, when it emerged into its militant phase inculcating class consciousness and class solidarity in the working masses, showed an example of building such a unity. Thus we find the early communist movement putting forward its idea of forging Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of the unity of the exploited masses in the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal fight and criticising the weakness of the Hindu-Muslim unity in the Khilafat agitation (See "Manifesto on Hindu-Muslim Unity" in the documents).

The events of 1920 which led to the Nagpur decision can be briefly summarised. Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali who were joined along with the hundreds of other patriots in the course of anti Rowlatt agitation - were released in December 1919. In January 1920 Khilafat manifesto was issued by the Khilafat Committee. This was followed by a supporting manifesto issued by Gandhiji. In May 1920 the All-India Khilafat Committee adopted Gandhiji's noncooperation programme. In September 1920, the special Congress session at Calcutta took the

decision to launch the noncooperation movement for the triple demand of righting the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and of swaraj. In October 1920 Mohammad Ali returned from England where he had gone at the head of the delegation with a memorandum to the British government to right the Khilafat wrong. He had returned empty-handed, reporting the failure of his mission. He came to the firm conclusion that Khilafat question cannot be solved without simultaneously fighting for India's freedom and therefore Hindu-Muslim unity.

An important development of 1920 and an offshoot of the Khilafat movement was the great Hijrat movement of 1920, which we cited at the beginning of this Note as one of the streams out of which the early communist movement arose. When the Indian Khilafat movement made common cause with the National Congress to fight the British, they gave the call to the Indian Muslim youth to leave the country and go to Turkey to join Kemal Pasha's army. This is how M. N. Roy briefly describes the Muhajir (emigrant) movement in his *Memoirs* (p. 455) and he puts the number of those who left India in 1920 at some 50,000.

Shaukat Usmani, an emigrant himself—who joined the CPI in Tashkent in 1921 and who later as a prominent communist leader was in the Kanpur and Meerut Conspiracy Cases—describes this movement thus in his *Peshawar to Moscow* (Delhi, 1927).

"The wave of Hijrat which surged over the political ocean of India in 1920 swept away with it to lands far off not only the dissatisfied landless peasantry and shopkeepers of the Punjab but also some of the intelligentsia of the country with clear notions of freedom.

"This intelligentsia was a part and parcel of the advanced leftwing of the Indian nationalist movement who could not conscientiously acquiesce in the programme of nonviolent noncooperation. According to them nonviolent noncooperation did not satisfy the fundamental (basic) conditions for achieving swaraj. This cult, destitute of any dynamic force, did not appeal in the least to their younger imagination. The Hijrat movement afforded them an opportunity of going outside and studying the methods of other countries. They availed themselves of the invitation of His Majesty the Amir, who welcomed all who left India for Afghanistan.

"Primarily, the Hijrat was a religious movement started for the Muslims dissatisfied with the dealings of the British government with the Turkish Khilafat. It enjoined every Muslim who could not satisfy his conscience under the British raj to leave for a country under Muslim raj. The Khilafat had made the Muslims desperate, Hijrat was its outcome. It swept away to Afghanistan more than 36,000 people."

It is clear from Shaukat Usmani's account that it was the religious aspect of the Khilafat movement and demand that moved the Muhajirs as a whole. The idea was to leave the country whose rulers (British) were attacking an Islamic state and acting against Muslim faith and to settle down in a country which was under Muslim raj or king.

Rafiq Ahmed, a Muhajir himself, who was in the same batch as

Shaukat Usmani, Abdul Majid, Ferozuddin Mansoor, Fazl Ilahi Qurban and Ghaus Rahaman and others who later joined the CPI and some of whom were arrested and tried in the famous Peshawar Conspiracy Cases, has written a detailed and instructive account of his experiences.

He writes that he arrived in Delhi from Bhopal on 18 April 1920 and attended there the Khilafat conference, where he says a firman of Amir Amanullah was read out and the question of Hijrat was discussed. The exact content of Amanullah's firman is not known, but the Amir made it known that he sympathised with the Hijrat movement and that the Muhajirs would receive help and support if they came to Afghanistan.

The Amir's sympathy and support to the Hijrat movement arose from his desire to support the Khilafat demand which was also popular among the masses in Afghanistan. A spectacular support to a mass of Muhajirs coming from India, he must have thought, would bring greater mass support from the population and thus strengthen his fight for the country's independence against the British.

The Amir's government had made generous arrangements to receive the Indian immigrants, to afford them food and shelter on their way as they marched through the country to Kabul. These arrangements soon broke down as their number swelled to tens of thousands. According to the account of an ordinary Muhajir (emigrant), one Mohammad Baksh—a tailor from Ludhiana, whose statement to the police after his return from Kabul is in the Home Department political files—the Muhajirs were put up in an open camp outside the gates of Kabul. He says:

"The Amir's officials supplied them with food for 3 days. Their morning meal consisted of bread and meat and the evening meal, pulao, bread, soup and curds. On the fourth day the Amir's officials told them to make their own arrangements in regard to food" (NAL-HPD, File No. 20, 1920, Proceedings, September, Part B).

Some wealthy people, who had joined the Hujrat with a large number of their followers, paid for the expenses of all they had brought with them as long as their money lasted.

"Hindu Muhajirs", says Baksh, "are fed and accommodated at the expense of Kabul Hindus" (*ibid*). He further adds: "The poor people who had migrated to Afghanistan are in great distress. The Amir's government does not supply them with food and their accommodation. Such men are accommodated at the Masjid at the Edward Gate outside Kabul."

The total number of emigrants (including families and children) was estimated at about one lakh says Baksh. M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* puts down the figure to 50,000 and Shaukat Usmani whom we have quoted above puts the figure at 36,000.

Whatever the exact figure may have been, the mass of Muhajirs who entered Afghanistan in the spring and summer of 1920 was too big a load for the slender resources of that small state. It is true a number of Muhajirs suffered. The Afghan government sometimes used force to put down protests against inadequacy of accommodation and food.

But these were minor incidents. On the whole the thousands of emigrants received a generous welcome and treatment at the hands of the people and the government of Afghanistan. What actuated this government was not just a fellow-feeling for brother coreligionists but the bond of solidarity with fellow fighters in the common anti-imperial struggle for the independence of their respective countries.

When Amir Amanullah issued a fatwah welcoming the Muhajirs had not bargained for such a large mass of emigrants. He had ready-made plan to absorb the tens of thousands of Muslims Peshawar, Sindh and Punjab. He concentrated them in the vast & populated but fertile valley of Jabal-us-Siraj.

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"Majority of the Sindh emigrants are now (August 1920) at Jabal-us-Siraj, each of them being supplied with atta, fuel and accommodation. Land is distributed to emigrants now at Jabal-us-Siraj but not to at Kabul." The Indian emigrants had not sufficient resources to sustain themselves in Jabal-us-Siraj. They could not acclimatise themselves there. The initial enthusiasm of the great mass of common Muhajirs who were mainly moved by the religious appeal of the movement & over, they were soon clamouring to return.

To the educated minority among the emigrants Amanullah offered facilities for military education and jobs in military and other services. But the educated minority was on the whole the political section which was moved not so much by religious & the desire to learn from the experience of other countries for independence in India. This national revolutionary group was not interested in settling in Afghanistan or in the Amir. They wanted to go to Turkey (Anatolia) which was reached through crossing over into Soviet Russia. The Amir refused them permission to cross over to Soviet Russia. A fairly detailed account of this section of the Muhajirs is given by Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed. The rest seems to have returned to India by the end of 1920.

How many crossed over into Soviet Russia? Mohammad Shafiq the earliest emigrant who reached the beginning of 1920, says that in September-October 1920 150 Muhajirs already there. Both Shaukat Usmani & Rafiq Ahmed give a parallel account of a batch of 80 emigrants who crossed over into Soviet Russia in July 1920 and after a series of adventures including the participation in the defence of the Soviet Republic against the counter-revolutionaries They returned to India in September-October 1920.

Both Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed were in Kabul some time at May end or the end of June 1920. They had an audience with Amir Amanullah who refused to allow them to proceed to Afghan border and to Soviet Russia in order to be able to proceed to Turkey.

Indian revolutionaries there. Shaukat Usmani says he met Moulavi Obaidullah Sindhi and Rafiq Ahmed says he met Obaidullah and Abdul Rab and M.P.B.T. Acharya.

Moulavi Obaidullah Sindhi was a teacher in the Deobandh Muslim Religious University. Inspired by Pan-Islamism, he left for Afghanistan at the outbreak of the first world war taking with him a batch of fifteen students. His aim was to get help there to join the jihad call of Turkey. We hear of him in 1915 in Kabul when he joined with Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah to form the "provisional government of India". Dr Bhupendranath Dutta says he contacted the Wahabi Party people in tribal area and is also credited with having organised a branch of the Indian National Congress in Kabul.

Throughout the early months of 1920 both Rab and Acharya were in Kabul. They seem to have come over from Russia to Kabul towards the end of 1919 after having heard that the large number of emigrants from India are expected to be in Afghanistan by the beginning of 1920. They seem to have left Kabul for Tashkent towards the end of June after having done their best to smooth the way to Soviet Russia of the Muhajir batches who wanted to go there. Obaidullah, who was also there in those days, also seems to have helped in this.

We have underlined these activities of Indian revolutionaries in Kabul in connection with the emigrants, who reflected the projection of the noncooperation movement taking shape in India in 1920, because it was exactly at this time that an assembly of Indian revolutionaries held in Kabul on 17 February 1920 passed a resolution which was addressed to Lenin. Lenin's message of greeting broadcast on 10 May 1920 was later published in *Pravda* (CW, 31, p. 138). The resolution of Indian revolutionaries' meeting in Kabul which is also given (p. 554) reads thus:

"Indian revolutionaries express their deep gratitude and their admiration of the great struggle carried on by Soviet Russia for the liberation of all oppressed classes and peoples, and especially for the liberation of India. Great thanks to Soviet Russia for her having heard the cries of agony from the 315,000,000 people suffering under the yoke of Imperialism. The mass meeting accepts with joy the hand of friendship and help extended to oppressed India."

We have no direct proof as to where the resolution of the meeting of Indian revolutionaries emanated from. The footnote from which we have quoted earlier says the meeting took place in Kabul on 17 February 1920. This enables us to assert with some confidence that the resolution to which Lenin replied with a message of greeting was connected with the activities of Rab, Acharya and others with whom Lenin was already in touch.

Abdul Rab and Acharya seem to have gone back to Tashkent at the end of June 1920. Dr Devendra Kaushik records that a speech delivered by Abdul Rab in a mosque was reported in the *Izvestia Turk Tshka* of 4 July 1920. Shafiq who was in Tashkent since January or February

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Both Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed say that their batch reached Kabul some time at May end or the end of June 1920. Both say they had an audience with Amir Amanullah who rejected their request to be allowed to proceed to Afghan border and to cross over into Soviet Russia in order to be able to proceed to Turkey. Both say they met

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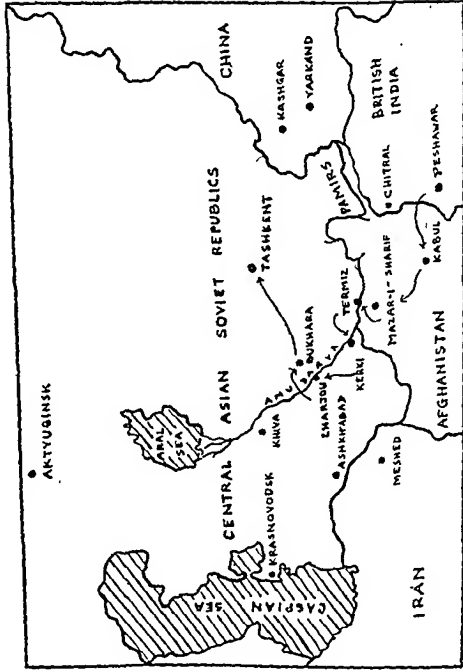
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We have underlined these activities of Indian revolutionaries in Kabul in connection with the emigrants, who reflected the projection of the noncooperation movement taking shape in India in 1920, because it was exactly at this time that an assembly of Indian revolutionaries held in Kabul on 17 February 1920 passed a resolution which was addressed to Lenin Lenin's message of greeting broadcast on 10 May 1920 was later published in *Pravda* (CW, 31, p. 138). The resolution of Indian revolutionaries' meeting in Kabul which is also given (p. 554) reads thus:

"Indian revolutionaries express their deep gratitude and their admiration of the great struggle carried on by Soviet Russia for the liberation of all oppressed classes and peoples, and especially for the liberation of India. Great thanks to Soviet Russia for her having heard the cries of agony from the 315,000,000 people suffering under the yoke of imperialism. The mass meeting accepts with joy the hand of friendship and help extended to oppressed India."

We have no direct proof as to where the resolution of the meeting of Indian revolutionaries emanated from. The footnote from which we have quoted earlier says the meeting took place in Kabul on 17 February 1920. This enables us to assert with some confidence that the resolution to which Lenin replied with a message of greeting was connected with the activities of Rab, Acharya and others with whom Lenin was already in touch.

Abdul Rab and Acharya seem to have gone back to Tashkent at the end of June 1920. Dr Devendra Kaushik records that a speech delivered by Abdul Rab in a mosque was reported in the *Izvestia Turk Tsika* of 4 July 1920. Shafiq who was in Tashkent since January or February



Route of Muhajirs : Peshawar to Tashkent

1920 and who produced one issue of the Urdu-Persian paper called *Zamindar* also says in his statement that the Indian Revolutionary Association (branch) formed in Tashkent was asked to send delegates to the Second Congress of the CI which was to open in Leningrad on 19 July. Shafiq says that all three of them left Tashkent to attend the congress.

We have earlier referred to the two parallel accounts, one by Shaukat Usmani and another by Rafiq Ahmed, of that historic batch of emigrants which insisted on crossing the borders of Afghanistan into Soviet Russia, with the object of going to Turkey, but whose thrilling experience in the summer and autumn months of 1920 in the land of the revolution brought the best of them to communism and made them foundation members of the CPI formed in Tashkent.

It was a batch of 80 Muhajirs from among some 300 who in June 1920 were camped in Jabal-us-Siraj, where the Afghan government had arranged for their temporary stay. The leaders of this batch had earlier met the Amir and asked him to allow them to proceed further. He had rejected their request and asked them to go to Jabal-us-Siraj where the government had made arrangements for their stay. Shaukat Usmani wrote that two petitions signed by the 80 sent to the Amir reiterating their request were not answered. Finally in July they sent in their third petition which was in the form of an ultimatum stating that they were determined to march towards the border and cross it.

The authorities threatened them at first but finally let them go and so the historic trek of the 80 started in July 1920. Of these 80, forty were nationalists and 40 were pure Khilafatists. When they marched out in an orderly file, poorly dressed, each armed with nothing but sticks cut from the local trees, they shouted "Alla Ho Akbar". All the same the best among them were staunch anti-imperialists and national revolutionaries, who in six months' time were to become communists. Among them were Abdul Majid and Shaukat Usmani who were later in the Meerut Conspiracy Case; late Ferozuddin Mansoor, a noted communist journalist who later became the general secretary of the CP in West Pakistan; and Fazl Ilahi Qurban—a communist and trade unionist who later left the movement. Among them were Rafiq Ahmed of Bhopal and Ghaus Rahaman, both communists, as well as Akbar Khan Qureshi of Haripur, Mian Akbar Shah and others. Shaukat Usmani says of these 80, "Many are holding high positions in Pakistan, some are leading practitioners, some as doctors and others as army officers" (Autobiography, Mss, p. 56)

The trek of the 80 led from Jabal-us-Siraj, which is some 50 miles north of Kabul, across Panjshir river and the Hindukush mountain, to Mazar-e-Sharif—the northern capital of Afghanistan. After resting there a few days they marched via Palake-sar to the banks of Amu Darya (river) which they crossed in boats to the town of Termiz which is inside the borders of Soviet Russia.

Rafiq Ahmed describes how the Russian commander of the Fort

Termiz, after satisfying himself that the 80 were Indian revolutionaries who had braved all dangers, crossed rivers and mountains to come to the land of revolution, ordered a grand welcome demonstration for their reception.

'We formed into a procession. Then the whole market turned up to watch the procession. In the front was the band, then came the officers, followed by our party and the detachment of the Red Army and in the end the carriages loaded with our luggage. Women and children were shouting slogans, some in Turkish and some in Russian. We could not understand the meaning of these slogans but this much we knew that they took us to be Indian revolutionaries' (Rafiq Ahmed, *An Unforgettable Journey*, Mss., p. 16)

In Termiz the ragged Indian emigrants were the honoured guests of the Red Army commander and the revolutionary people. They were well fed and housed, given clothes and shoes. Usmani says: "For the first time in our long exile we knew now real rest and comfort" (p. 51). This was in July 1920. Usmani records that half of them told their hosts that they had come to Soviet Russia to seek help for the Indian revolution, while the other half wanted to go to Turkey. Road to Turkey led down the Amu Darya and through a region rendered unsafe by the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries. The commander offered to send them all to Tashkent, but the Khilafatists were adamant and so when boat transport was available all the 80 were allowed to go by two row-boats down the Amu Darya at their own risk.

It was August 1920 when they boarded the boats. After travelling down the river for about a day or so the boats were stopped by a large party of armed Turkoman counter-revolutionaries. They were dragged out of the boats, their luggage looted and they were marched like prisoners at the point of the gun to some faraway place. For the night they were herded together in a narrow room and locked up. Shaukat Usmani writes

"Black hole of Calcutta is no doubt a calculated myth, but the Moplah train tragedy and our own state are not myths, since eyewitnesses of these two episodes are still alive. How horrible a place! A small room. We were locked into this hole without any holes. There were no apertures through which air could enter. We were gasping for breath. It was a very hot season. It was August" (p. 37).

In the morning they were taken out and marched like chaingang prisoners to a place in the desert where they were herded together to be shot. They were surrounded by some 700 Turkomans. The "black hole" incident does not appear in Rafiq Ahmed's account but they being herded together to be shot is common to both the narratives. But at the last moment a miracle happened and the order to shoot them came to be cancelled.

According to Usmani the miraculous incident was the sudden bursting of shells in the neighbourhood. The Red Army which was somewhere nearabout was shelling the counter-revolutionary camp. According to

Rafiq's account the countervailing order came at the last moment from the counter-revolutionaries' commander, who suspected that the 80 prisoners were Afghan citizens and their shooting would involve them into hostility with the Afghan government.

After the shooting order was cancelled, the emigrants were split up into small groups and handed over to different Turkoman companies which took them to different camps. Even according to Rafiq's account it was an area where engagements between the Red Army and the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries were going on and they could not afford to keep large groups of prisoners together.

Split up into small groups, they were no longer treated as war-prisoners but as slaves in the respective camps where the rebel Turkomans lived with their families. According to Usmani they lived this life of slavery for some two weeks. Rafiq describes their life and these camps thus:

"The camps were situated in a big desert through which passed a rough road. On each side of this road were villages and fields. The people here spoke Persian. In our camp some persons knew Persian also... So I used to narrate to them legends of Muslim prophets, and Persian-knowing persons translated my stories into Turkish language. They were greatly impressed... eventually they stopped tying us with ropes. We were allowed to sleep inside."

According to both the accounts, after two weeks they heard bursting very-light bombs and the sound of machinegun fire. Soon after the Turkoman rebel forces vacated the camps and left, leaving the various groups of prisoners behind to their own devices.

Their captors having fled, the Muhajir groups which were separated from each other, now moved out, met each other and went in search of food together. The Turkomans had taken away all their belongings and food stocks with them. There was no food in the desert except what was inadvertently left by the Turkomans in their camps when they hurriedly fled. The emigrant groups who had now reunited, were 57 in number (Usmani, p. 62). They fed themselves on whatever they found and having spent a night together in an empty hut began their trek in the morning to the nearest Red Army base from which the shelling had come.

They soon located the Red Army camp, and when they were identified by the commander-in-charge after radioing to Tashkent and Termiz, they were treated politely, served food and comfortably accommodated. Rafiq describes this part of the story thus:

"We passed some days in this way. One day I was going to the market when I saw my companions including Akbar Khan were coming accompanied by Russian officers. Turkomans had left them tied with ropes and the Russians searching for our companions had brought them here. Within a week 69 companions of our party were located and brought to the camp. The rest 11 were killed whose dead bodies

were found cut into pieces. The name of this place was Kirkee" (p. 23).

Shaukat Usmani's version is slightly different:

"We were 57 when we entered Kirkee after the fleeing of the Turkomans. On our representation to the Kirkee authorities about the rest of our comrades, an expedition was sent and within a week's time our number was 76. Unfortunately some four of our batch were murdered by the Turkomans and two crossed-over to Afghan border when the Turkomans were in panic" (p. 65) *

Thus the remaining 76 Muhajirs were once again under the protection of the Red Army. Usmani describes.

"Two big barracks were provided to us and once more we knew what comfort was and moreover what freedom meant. Plenty of rations, good food, good friendship and material to read. From condemned prisoners to slaves and now the guests of a vast republic stretching from the Pacific to the Baltic, from White Sea to the borders of India, Persia, Afghanistan and Turkey"

Among the emigrants the Khilafatists again raised the question of proceeding to Turkey. The others argued against it but the former would not be convinced. The question was however decided by another dramatic turn of events

In a few days the Turkoman counter-revolutionary forces mobilised and surrounded the Kirkee Fort. Actually there were two forts—one Russian and another old Bukharan fort. In between were the town and market of Kirkee. When the news of Turkomans surrounding Kirkee reached the Muhajirs they offered their services to the president of the revolutionary committee, who gladly accepted the offer. The entire Soviet and Jadidist (Progressive Turkoman) forces in the fortress were drawn up for defence and the Indians supplied with arms took up their position in their ranks. Usmani writes:

"Trench life in September-October rains with cold and shrieking winds was not very pleasing and easy. Yet it was very thrilling and inspiring. We were having the genuine satisfaction of fighting for the Russian revolution and we were rightly proud of this privilege granted to us by the Russian comrades" (p. 64).

This defence lasted for a couple of weeks. A big gun, firing shrapnel shells, which had arrived on a flat-bottomed steamer by river also participated. The attack of the counter-revolutionaries was successfully met and reinforcements having arrived a counterattack against the enemy forces was launched. Rafiq describes how some of the emigrants, among them Usmani himself, joined in this counterattack across

* Usmani gives an account of 82. Two more who were not signatories to the petition to the Amir had joined the batch in Afghanistan. Rafiq gives the number as 80.

the river and how after several hours' sustained fight the Turkoman rebel forces began to flee.

Usmani describes the sequel thus:

"The entire area around Kirkee and Termiz which some time back resembled a battlefield and where nothing was heard but the roar of guns became now once more a settled area.

"It did not take much time for the Turkomans to realise that the Jadidist (Progressive) Party of Bokhara stood for their complete emancipation from the yoke of Amir and the landlords. Their ignorance was exploited by the Amir and the mullahs. Once they knew what the revolution stood for they did not like to oppose it" (p. 66).

Usmani says further; "The revolutionary committee of Bokhara showed the Turkomans very high degree of magnanimity and distributed the estates of the Amir and the kalantars among the peasantry.

"And after the surrender the entire market of Kirkee was flooded by the very captors of ours. How smilingly and in a friendly manner they embraced us!" (p. 66).

According to Usmani it was towards the end of October 1920 that reinforcements arrived in Kirkee and the Indian emigrants were relieved of their duties in the defence of and the counter-offensive from Kirkee. A message was received from Tashkent, where M. N. Roy, Abani Mukherji, Acharya, Shafiq, etc. had arrived after attending the Second Congress of the Comintern, that the Indians be sent on to Tashkent.

The route fixed for them was from Kirkee down the Amu Darya to Chariul, from there to Bokhara and from Bokhara by train to Tashkent. At Chariul they were again given a thunderous welcome by the Red Army and the local population. When they started towards Bokhara, the Khilafatist section among them again insisted on being taken westward, towards Krasnovodsk and Baku on the way to Turkey and not to Tashkent. After a fruitless effort to convince them, the Russian authorities allowed them to go Baku. Both Rafiq and Usmani say that a batch was allowed to go to Turkey. Usmani says he does not know what happened to them.

M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* gives a slightly different account. In October 1920 Roy came to Tashkent after the Second Congress of the Comintern and as a member of the Eastern Bureau of the C.I. He went to Bokhara after the Emir there had fled and the Revolutionary Committee had taken power. There he heard that a group of Indian emigrants who had crossed into Soviet Russia after a hazardous journey had fallen into the hands of the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries. So he got a rescue party sent to those parts to get the Indians freed. Roy writes:

"The expedition returned to Bokhara while I was still there. The liberated Indians were in rags and tatters and hardly able to move because of the long period of starvation" (RM, p. 455).

"The entire rescued party was of seventy odd men; about fifty of them agreed to go to Tashkent." About the rest Roy writes: "They

insisted on being sent to Turkey. As nothing else could be done, I sent them to Baku, from where they could proceed to Anatolia. With the more reasonable ones, I left for Tashkent" (RM, p. 457).

We leave the story of Muhajirs here, to take up the background information of the Second Congress of the Communist International. This we do for two reasons. Firstly, because we are reproducing the documents and discussions on the National and Colonial Question at the Second Congress especially the Supplementary Theses of M. N. Roy and its amendments by Lenin and the discussion on the same. Secondly, the activities of the Muhajirs subsequent to their arrival in Tashkent in September or October 1920, the Baku Congress (September 1920), the formation of Indian Military School and the plan to raise the army of liberation—all these events took place in accordance with certain decisions taken in Moscow after the Second Congress.

"The Second Congress of the Communist International opened in Petrograd on 19 July 1920 and then met in Moscow from 23 July to 7 August. Twentyseven communist parties and also delegates from communist groups and other proletarian organisations—of 67 organisations in all—were represented at the congress. The proceedings took place under the guidance of Lenin who drafted the main congress decisions" (CI-CPI, p. 13).

The protocol of the Second Congress of CI (Russian edition) shows the exact position of the Indian delegation at the congress. As we have stated earlier, while M. N. Roy and Evelyn Roy were listed as official delegates of CP Mexico, recently formed, Abani Mukherji and M. P. B. T. Acharya were delegates from British India with consultative vote in the column of party or organisation, against their name there is a question mark.

The documents of the Second Congress regarding the National and Colonial Question which we are reproducing are: (1) Lenin's Theses on the National and Colonial Question in the form they were adopted by the congress, (2) the facsimile of the original typed copy of M. N. Roy's Supplementary Theses which he handed over to Lenin (RM, p. 381) and which bears Lenin's cuts and corrections, (3) the text of the Supplementary Thesis in the form they were finally adopted by the congress, (4) Roy's speech introducing the theses and the discussion on the same.

Among those who participated in the discussions were a Persian delegate Sultan-Zade, the Italian left social democratic leader Serrati and the Dutch delegate Sneevliet, who is mentioned in the text of the discussion report by his pseudonym—Maring. About Sultan-Zade Roy gives the following information: "Having come to Russia as a student before the revolution, he had joined the underground Bolshevik Party and settled at Baku to carry on revolutionary work among the Persian workers in the oil fields" (RM, p. 382). About Maring (Sneevliet) Roy says: "The Dutchman was the only European communist who had actually lived in the East Indies (Indonesia), acquired first-hand know-

ledge of the nationalist movement, and actively helped the development of the labour movement and a socialist party, and then the only one in the colonial world" (p. 381)... "He was a powerful speaker in his mother-tongue, but addressed the congress in German, which he spoke also fluently. In the commission he spoke in English which was understood by a majority of members. From the platform of the international congress, he denounced the bourgeoisie of his country (Holland) for the tyranny and outrages committed in the Indonesian colonies" (p. 383).

Regarding the organisational steps taken after the Second Congress and which are relevant to our subject Roy gives the following information. The secretariat of the congress proposed his name and that of Sultan-Zade to the two seats allotted to the Asian countries on the ECCI of 41, but he declined to accept the seat and in his place the Korean delegate Pak was taken.

The newly elected ECCI met after the congress in a formal session and elected a subcommittee known as "Mail Bureau" (Small Bureau) which was to be in permanent session between the two meetings of the executive to carry on its current work. M. N. Roy says, while still in Moscow he was co-opted as a member on this Mail Bureau, which in its meeting passed two resolutions: (1) To hold the first congress of the oppressed peoples of the East at Baku and (2) to set up a Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International at Tashkent.

According to this decision the congress of the Eastern Peoples was held at Baku on 1 September 1920. According to Zinoviev, who reported to the ECCI on the congress on 20 September, it was attended by 1,891 representatives of 32 nationalities, who mostly came from the Caucasus and the Central Asian territories of Russia, but included also many Turks and Persians.

M. N. Roy says he sent Abani Mukherji to the congress but there is no record of his having made a speech at the congress.*

The ECCI issued a manifesto in July 1920, explaining why it was convening this congress of Persian, Armenian and Turkish peasants

* Zafar Imam, (*Colonialism in East-West Relations*, Eastman Publications, New Delhi, 1969, p. 22), quoting from Soviet sources gives an excerpt from the speech of an Indian delegate to the congress: "We have been waiting for a long time for this congress with a hope that all the people of the East will unite and free us from world capitalism." The author also quotes from Radek's speech at the congress which confirms the quotation given by us. Radek is quoted to have said: "Your destiny and ours are one. Either we and the peoples of the East shall be united and consequently shall hasten the victory of the Western European proletariat or we shall perish and you become slaves." The source he quotes from is the stenographic record of the Baku Congress, 1-8 September 1920.

and workers. In this manifesto there was no direct reference to India, but there is a para addressed to the peasants and workers of the Near East:

" if you arm yourself, if you unite with the Russian workers' and peasants' Red Army, then you will be able to defy the French, English and American capitalists, then you will be free of your oppressors, then you will have the opportunity in free alliance with the workers' republics of the world to take care of your interests" (CI-JD, 1, p. 109).

There were probably direct references to India in the speeches at the congress. Radek, who attended the congress on behalf of the ECCI together with Zinoviev and Bela Kun, is reported to have told the delegates that they 'need fear no enemy, nothing can stay the torrent of workers and peasants of Persia, Turkey, India, if they unite with Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia can produce arms and arm not only to its own workers and peasants, but also peasants of India, Persia, Anatolia, all the oppressed, and lead them in a common struggle and common victory" (CI-JD, 1, p. 105).

M. N. Roy says he was not interested in attending the Baku Congress, but he mentions an interesting fact in that connection: "a number of Indian soldiers had deserted from the British Army in Khorasan and reached Baku to be hailed as delegates to the congress" (RM, p. 395).

This is confirmed by Devendra Kaushik, who writes: "It is learnt from the issue of *Azad Hindustan Akhbar* of October 1, 1920 that seven delegates from India participated in the Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East. Some of them, the paper writes, were Punjabis from Frontier Province. The issue of September 15 carries sketches of three Indians—Mohammad Fariq, khalanchi (treasurer), Fazil Al Oadir, secretary, Indian Revolutionaries' Association, Baku, and Ghulam Fariq. From the sketches it appears as if they came from among the deserters of the British Indian Army. They have typical faces of Indian frontier soldiers with high turbans and long pointed soldierly moustaches. The August 22 issue of *Azad Hindustan Akhbar* issued a direct call to the men of the British Indian Army for an armed revolt against their colonial masters. It offers 'he jawans 'two times better jobs' in the Red Army'" (CA, p. 113).

In accordance with the second decision of the ECCI mentioned above, Roy was appointed to the Central Asiatic Bureau of the CI

* In the Peshawar Conspiracy Case *Crown vs Akbar Shah* and seven others, Fida Ali, prosecution witness, himself a Muhajir who was in Tashkent as well as in Moscow schools in 1920-21, deposed that "Akbar Shah, accused, went off with Masood Ali Shah for a conference at Baku". This was in the Tashkent period according to the witness. Thus the reference is to the Congress of the Eastern Peoples held at Baku in September 1920 (Judgment in the Sessions Court, Peshawar, 18 May 1923).

together with Sokolnikov and Safarov. These two left immediately for Turkestan to their posts, but Roy remained behind in Moscow for some time to get clarification about his jobs and also the wherewithal for the same.

Roy says that at that time there was a suggestion by Karakhan and Borodin that he be sent as Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan. This was later given up as impractical and improper and a Russian Bolshevik Raskolnikov was selected for the job. The idea behind this rather unusual suggestion was to use Afghanistan under Amanullah as a base for Indian revolutionary activities directed against the British. Raskolnikov, says Roy, before he left for Kabul, "urged me to press for the plan of supplying the frontier tribes with plenty of arms and money, so that they could wage a war against the British. The consequent weakening of British power would enable the Khilafat movement to overthrow it. That was my old idea, which still fascinated me" (RM, p 417).

This was however not a new plan. Indian revolutionaries in Turkey and Germany in the period of the first world war had such a plan. An attempt was made to form a liberation army out of Indian army-men taken prisoners of war in Turkey and Germany and to march through Persia to the north-west frontier. Attempts were also made to contact the frontier tribes. Names of Indian revolutionaries like Khankhoje, Pramathanath Dutt (Daud Ali), Rahmat Ali Zakaria, Obeidullah Sindhi, Acharya were associated with such a plan, at that time pursued with the help of the Germans.

The plan was being taken up by Roy in the new context and in an entirely new situation. Roy devotes a whole chapter of his *Memoirs* to this "Plan to Raise an Army of Liberation" (pp. 419-26). Roy's plan "was not simply to supply the frontier tribes with the sinews of war so that they could make trouble for the British-Indian government". "A new factor had appeared on the scene . . . responding to a call of the Khilafat Committee, thousands of Muslims, including many educated young men, were leaving India for Turkey to join the army of Kemal Pasha. It was a religious Pan-Islamist movement. But it gave me an opportunity to contact a large number of possible recruits for an army to fight for the liberation of India instead of a lost cause." Roy expected "the educated amongst the Indian Muhajirs might realise the pointlessness of a pilgrimage to Turkey", especially after the abolition of Turkish sultanate had put an end to the institution of Islamic Khilafat and "it should be possible to enlist them in an army of Indian liberation".

Roy has described his plan thus: "My plan was to raise, equip and train such an army in Afghanistan. Using the frontier territories as the base of operation and with the mercenary support of the tribesmen, the liberation army would march into India and occupy some territory where a civil government should be established as soon as possible. The first proclamation of the revolutionary government would outline a programme of social reform to follow national independence. It would call

upon the people to rise in the rear of the enemy, so that the Liberation Army could advance further and further into the country. The appeal should be addressed particularly to the industrial and transport workers" (RM, p. 420)

The plan was submitted to Lenin who with shrewd realism pinpointed its weak spot. Roy reports how Lenin argued: "We must win the co-operation of the Afghan government. Again, how? King Amanullah was not a revolutionary. He was shrewd enough to see that he could profit by pretending to be anti-British. But the opportunist policy would ultimately lead him to a deal with the highest bidder, and the British could pay more. Then, there was the decisive consideration that, in the last analysis, King Amanullah had more in common with the British rulers of India than the Russian Bolshevik regime" (RM, p. 417).

Lenin warned: "We should have no illusions." At the same time he asked Roy to prepare a detailed plan for the sanction of the Polit Bureau and the Revolutionary Military Council. The requirements for implementing the plan were finally sanctioned and Roy moved to Tashkent with the same:

"Our party travelled in two trains, one composed of twentyseven 30-ton wagons carrying arms (pistols, rifles, machineguns, hand-grenades, light artillery, etc.), adequate supplies of ammunition and military stores, and field equipment which included several wireless receivers and transmitters. The train was escorted by two companies of crack Red Army soldiers..."

"The other train was composed as follows: two wagons loaded with money (gold coins, bullion and pound and rupee notes); ten wagons carried dismantled aeroplanes and the complete outfit of an air force battalion; the personnel of the latter and the staff of a military training school travelled in seven coaches, a salon was attached for my use... Our train was more heavily guarded" (RM, pp. 421-22).

When did Roy arrive in Tashkent with all this equipment? He says, "my party was ready to leave Moscow soon after the third anniversary of the October Revolution" (RM, p. 421). This would mean that he arrived in Tashkent with equipment in the second week of November 1920.

This cannot obviously be correct. The date on the documents recording the formation of the CPI group in Tashkent is 17 October 1920. M. N. Roy, Abani Mukherji as well as the Muhajirs are present on that date in Tashkent. Then again, Roy himself records that soon after his arrival in Tashkent two events took place, which he describes in considerable detail in his Memoirs. One is the flight of the Amir of Bukhara and the fall of Bukhara and Khorasan before the successful offensive of the Red Army and the taking over power by the revolutionary committee there. Second is the arrival of the Indian Muhajir group in Bukhara after their rescue from the hands of the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries near Kirkee.

Now the exact date of the battle of Bukhara is 2 September 1920. R. Vaidyanath in his book quotes Frunze's telegram to Lenin: "The fortress of old Bukhara was taken today by the Red Bukharan and our forces. The last pillar of Bukharan obscurantism... has fallen. The Red banner of world revolution is flying triumphantly over the Registan." This is dated 2 September 1920 (FCAR, p. 127). The revolutionary committee, a council of people's nazirs, took over power some time after and on 6 October 1920 a People's Soviet Republic was proclaimed in Bukhara.

Both Shaukat Usmani (in his "Autobiography") and Rafiq Ahmed (in his "An Unforgettable Journey") describe how they went from Kirkee to Bukhara on their way to Tashkent, and state that it was very soon after the revolutionary committee had taken over power there.

Roy also describes how when he arrived in Bukhara after the revolution was victorious there, he met the Indian Muhajirs brought there from Kirkee (RM, chapter 61; "Revolution Enters the Harem", pp. 452-58). Thus we can conclude that Roy arrived in Tashkent with the equipment some time at the end of August 1920, i.e. 2-3 weeks after the conclusion of the Second Congress of the CI and the Muhajirs must have reached Tashkent about the third week of September.

Before we take up the subsequent events in Central Asia in 1920, viz the political and military training of the Muhajirs in the Indian Military School, the formation of the CPI in Tashkent and what happened to the plan of liberation, we would once again recapitulate the basic facts about the Muhajirs.

Once again source of information is the statements of witnesses and the accused in the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases and the accounts given by Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed supplemented by the account given by Roy in his *Memoirs*. Out of the total number of some 30,000 or more Muhajirs who had crossed into Afghanistan, not more than 200 seem to have gone to the Soviet Union in July-August 1920.

They marched in two khafilas, each of about 100 persons. One was led by Mohammad Akbar (Haripur) and the second by Akbarjan. The second khafila reached Bukhara without encountering any great difficulty. According to the statements made in the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases, many from this khafila returned to India; only 4 or 5 of these went to Tashkent for training. Not much is known about the persons in this khafila. It was the first khafila led by Mohammad Akbar consisting of about 80 Muhajirs which became famous in history. How it fell into the hands of the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries, what it suffered at their hands, how they were rescued by the Red Army and how they fought side by side with the Red Army in the defence of Kirkee—have been described both by Rafiq Ahmed ("Unforgettable Journey") and by Shaukat Usmani (Peshawar to Moscow—1927 and later in his *Mss.* "Autobiography"). We have referred to this account earlier up to the point they reached Bukhara.

Out of the 80 Muhajirs who crossed into Soviet Union at Termez

some 70 reached Bukhara Roy says "The entire rescued party was of some seventy odd men: about fifty of them agreed to go to Tashkent" (RM, p. 457). According to Rafiq Ahmed 11 were killed when they fell into the hands of the Turkomans and 63 reached Bukhara. According to Shaukat Usmani four were killed and 76 reached Bukhara. Both state that some of these insisted on going to Turkey and Roy says he sent them to Baku from where they could proceed to Anatolia. There is a mention in the Peshawar Case documents that two Muhajirs, Akbar Shah and Masood Ali Shah, attended the Baku Congress of the Eastern Peoples which opened on 1 September. These two belong to the first khafila which reached Bukhara immediately after Bukharan revolution on 2 September 1920. They might have gone straight from Charjui on the way to Bukhara.

The Indian Military School was established in Tashkent with the equipment and trainers brought by Roy in the two trains described earlier. The formal opening and the functioning of the school began probably at the beginning of October after the Muhajir batch of 50 had arrived in Tashkent. But even before that according to Roy he "went ahead with the plan of organising an irregular detachment with Indian soldiers who had deserted from the British army" (RM, p. 438). Roy claims that on this basis a sort of "international brigade" consisting of Indians, Persian revolutionaries and Russian communists was formed which acted as an auxiliary to the Red Army and played a part in clearing up the Meshed-Ashkhabad region of Soviet Union of the British Interventionists (RM, p. 437).

The Indian Military School (Indusky Kurs) in Tashkent was originally planned to train a liberation army based on the Muhajirs who were expected to enter the Soviet Union in large numbers and by arming frontier tribes. In fact in the formal and ceremonial opening of the school, speeches were made in that strain. "Trained in the Tashkent Military School, Indian revolutionaries would carry the message of the Russian revolution to their countries, which would surely inspire the Indian masses to undertake heroic actions for overthrowing the British rule" (RM, p. 469).

But soon after the school began to function with the first batch of Muhajirs, it became clear that the situation was not favourable for achieving the earlier high-pitched aims. Firstly, the earlier expectation of a large influx of Muhajirs was not realised; besides, because of their religious background, the element of political consciousness required of a national liberation army was weak. Secondly, as warned by Lenin, the Afghan government began to create difficulty: the end of 1920. They were expelling Indian revolutionaries. 1 3

ing of the trade agreement. He writes: "Before the year was out, the Soviet government received a blistering note from the British Foreign Secretary which referred to the Indian Military School at Tashkent as evidence of Soviet aggressive designs against the British empire. As a rupture of the newly established economic relations with Britain would prejudice the painful process of Russian reconstruction, the Indian Military School at Tashkent had to be disbanded" (RM, p. 468).

It is rather strange that Roy should make the trade treaty between the Soviet Union and Britain as the main reason of closing down the Military School; because he himself explains at some length how the inadequacy in both quantity and quality of the Indian cadres available and the noncooperative and hostile attitude of the Afghan government were the determining factors in taking this decision. Shaukat Usmani who stresses these other reasons comments bluntly: "It is absurd to think that this dissolution had anything to do with the trade negotiations between the Soviet and the British governments. Some writers have alleged so" (Mss "Autobiography", p. 99).

According to the various accounts of the Military School in Tashkent, there were three courses: one for training air-force pilots and officers, another for infantry officers and a third for ordinary infantry soldiers. Better educated cadres were selected for the first two courses while the uneducated were taken in the third course. General political education was given to all but the more educated were given an impressive political education course.

In October 1920, when the school started, there were present in Tashkent apart from the Muhajirs and M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji whom we have mentioned, other Indian revolutionaries like Abdul Rab and M.P.B.T. Acharya also. Roy mentions them as having recently come from Kabul (RM, p. 464). This is not true. They were in Moscow at the time of the Second Congress of the CI and Acharya was, as mentioned earlier, a delegate with consultative vote. Shafiq, one of the earliest Muhajirs to come to the Soviet Union (January 1920), was also present there.

Two other names must be mentioned. They are Rahmat Ali Zakaria and Mohammad Ali. These two are reported to be in the batch of students which Obeidullah Sindhi brought with him to Kabul in 1915. Both Zakaria and Mohammad Ali were associated with the "provisional government of India" formed by Mahendra Pratap in Kabul (Ghadar 1915 by Khushwant Singh and Satinder Singh, New Delhi, 1967, p. 94). Both of them seemed to have crossed into the Soviet Union in the footsteps of Mahendra Pratap some time in 1919.

Devendra Kaushik records: "On June 9, 1919 Zakaria addressed the Third Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan held in Tashkent. His address was greeted with the slogans of 'Long Live India'" (CA, pp. 112-13). We hear of Mohammad Ali in Moscow in the beginning of 1921. He was later associated with M. N. Roy in the Foreign Bureau of

the CPI. Both Rafiq Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani, when they came to Moscow in the beginning of 1921 to join the Eastern People's University after the Tashkent Military School was closed down, mention meeting Zakaria and Mohammad Ali in Moscow in connection with this university.

Out of 50 Muhajirs who were brought to Tashkent in the third week of September 1920, 26 joined the Military School. This number is given by the witnesses or approvers in the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases. According to Shaukat Usmani there were 16 in the Military School. He says these 16 plus himself went to the Eastern People's University in Moscow after the Tashkent school was closed. He says all the 50 would have joined the school but for the intrigues of Abdul Rab and Acharya. Both Rafiq Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani record their impression that among Indian revolutionaries in Tashkent two groups or parties were functioning—one of Abdul Rab and Acharya and the other of M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji. But they do not report what their differences were. Acharya's complaint against Roy is also mentioned in the minutes of CPI (Tashkent) reproduced in the documents of 1920.

Perhaps these differences can be understood in this way. Abdul Rab and Acharya were functioning in Tashkent region more than a year before Roy arrived on the scene. They had built wide contacts among the Indian traders in Tashkent as well as among the Indian soldiers who had defected from the British Indian army carrying out interventionist operations against Soviet rule. Devendra Kaushik quotes contemporary Soviet press reports stating that branches of the Indian Revolutionary Association were formed in Samarkand and Baku and that Indian revolutionaries were publishing "an obscure fortnightly paper" called *Azad Hindustan Akhbar* from Baku. According to information obtained from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CC of CPSU, Acharya was admitted as a delegate with consultative vote as a representative of Indian Revolutionary Association (Tashkent).

Abdul Rab and Acharya claimed with some justification to represent the Indian Revolutionary Association in Tashkent. M. N. Roy was in Tashkent as the member of the Eastern Bureau of the Comintern, appointed by the ECCI—a position which Roy admits he had attained not in any representative capacity but on his own individual merit. Perhaps at the root of the differences was the question, how was the help which the leaders of the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik Party wished to render to the Indian liberation movement to be routed—through the Association of the Indian Revolutionaries Abroad or through the Comintern and the Communist Party? These differences were sought to be ironed out in the early months of 1921 when a large and representative delegation of Indian revolutionaries visited Moscow and carried on long discussions with the representatives of the CI.

The 26 out of 50 Muhajirs who joined the Indian Military School in Tashkent in October 1920 seem to have done well. According to Roy, "three or four of them made the best of the elementary training which

could be imparted at Tashkent. Later on they were sent on to better equipped training centres in Russia proper. At least two of them did very well. One .. was attached to the Red Army aviation unit in Leningrad" and later died in a plane crash while "doing some acrobatics in a solo flight". The other was "placed in charge of a squadron stationed somewhere in South Russia to train cadets from Afghanistan and Persia" (RM, pp. 470-71).

Shaukat Usmani says "It should be said to the credit of the students of the Indusky Kurs that in no time they had mastered the Russian language and had adequate military training" (Mss, "Autobiography"). He also mentions the two who became airmen and gives the name of the one died in a plane crash as Abdur Rahim.

It has not been possible to get the names of all the 26 who joined the Indian Military School and some of whom later went to Moscow to join the Eastern People's University. But some 21 of these have been mentioned in the statements of the witnesses in the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases

(1) Fida Ali (Peshawar), (2) Abdul Qadar Sehrai (Haripur), (3) Sultan Mohammad (Lahore), (4) Mir Abdul Majid, (5) Habib Ahmed (Shahjahanpur, UP), (6) Ferozuddin Mansoor (Sheikupura), (7) Rafiq Ahmed (Bhopal), (8) Mian Akbar Shah (Nowshera Derveshi, Haripur), (9) Gour (Ghaus?) Rahaman, (10) Aziz Ahmed, (11) Fazl Ilahi Qurban, (12) Abdulla, (13) Mohammad Shafiq, (14) Shaukat Usmani, (15) Masood Ali Shah, (16) Master Abdur Hamid, (17) Abdul Rahim (Meerut, Hazara), (18) Ghulam Mohammad, (19) Mohammad Akbar, (20) Nissar Raz, (21) Hafiz Abdul Majid

Of these 21, ten (Nos 2-9, 13 and 19) were later on their return arrested and tried in the three Peshawar Conspiracy Cases and convicted to various terms of rigorous imprisonment ranging from two to seven years. Seventeen of them (Nos 1-16 and 21) were those who at the beginning of 1921 joined the Eastern People's University in Moscow.

These names are given by Fida Ali in his statement as an approver in the Peshawar Conspiracy Case. According to Shaukat Usmani also the number of Indian students who joined the university is 17. According to Rafiq Ahmed, Rahamat Ali Zakaria and Mohammad Ali were also in Moscow at the time and probably attending the Eastern People's University. Nazir Siddiqi and Habib Wafa joined the Red Army after training in Tashkent.

Before we conclude, we have to deal with the formation of CPI in Tashkent, the documents of which, preserved in the Tashkent Party Archives, have been reproduced here at the end of 1920 series. The initiative to form the CPI in Tashkent in October 1920 did not come from the CI or from its official representative there, viz M. N. Roy, who was appointed as member of the Eastern Bureau. It came from the other Indian revolutionaries there like Acharya and Abdul Rab and from a section of the Muhajirs. The Muhajirs of the first batch, 26 of whom were in the Indian Military School, had gone through the most remark-

able experience since their entry into the Soviet Union at Termiz. Their tremendous welcome at the hands of the Red Army and Soviet officials on their entry, their terrible experience at the hands of the Turkoman counter-revolutionaries, their rescue by the Red Army and later their participation in the defence of Kirkee shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army, their being witness to the Bukharan revolution, as they entered Bukhara after the Amir had fled and the Bukharan revolutionaries and Jadidists (Progressives) had taken over power there—all these events which they lived through in the span of two months could not but make a terrific impression on the minds of the young patriots. This helped the educated minority among them to free themselves from Pan-Islamic fanaticism, to understand national independence struggle in a secular way and to realise its political and social content, Roy was also giving political talks to the educated minority among them and this was having effect. "Most of them transferred their fanatical allegiance from Islam to communism" (RM, p. 464). Roy writes further: "I was surprised when some of them approached me with the proposal that they wanted to join the Communist Party. Others enquired why they should not found the Communist Party of India there and then." His account of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent is as follows:

"...the minority, which proposed the formation of an Indian Communist Party, was reinforced by the Abdul Rab-Acharya group and, on the latter's instigation, sent a delegation to the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International to plead their case. I tried to argue with them that there was no hurry. They should wait until they returned to India. There was no sense in a few emigrant individuals calling themselves the Communist Party. They were evidently disappointed, and I apprehended that the experience might dishearten them... So I agreed with the proposal of the formation of a Communist Party, knowing fully well that it would be a nominal thing, although it could function as the nucleus of a real Communist Party to be organised eventually. An intelligent and fairly educated young man named Mohammad Shafiq, who had come from Kabul with the Acharya group, was elected secretary of the Party" (RM, p. 465).

Devendra Kaushik to whom the credit of having brought to light the documents about the formation of the CPI in Tashkent goes tends not to accept the version of Roy and gives the following account:

"The initiative to form the emigre Communist Party of India at Tashkent did not come from these former Muhajirs whom Roy was imparting political education in Tashkent. It was Roy himself who took the initiative, although in his memoirs he gives the impression as if he was in the beginning averse to the idea. The Soviet authorities did not moot the idea in any way. The minutes of the meetings at which the Communist Party of India was founded were signed by Roy as the convening secretary and Acharya as president. The communication informing the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan about the founding of the Communist Party of India was signed by Roy in Russian

as the secretary concerned. The Communist Party of India remained a very small organisation at Tashkent. It had only 10 members—all of them resided in Tashkent" (Link, 26 January 1966, p. 76).

Elsewhere in the same article Kaushik has made the following additional comment

"Mohammad Shafiq was an educated young man from the Punjab. He became the secretary of the emigre Communist Party of India founded in Tashkent on October 17, 1920. Among other founder members of the party were M. N. Roy and his American wife Evelyn Trent-Roy, Abani Mukherji and his Russian wife Rosa Fitingof, Mohammad Ali (alias Ahmed Hasan) and M. Prativadi Bhayankar Acharya. In the paper recording the proceedings of the meeting at which the party was founded, Shafiq is mentioned as Mohammad Shafiq Siddiqi. He, it seems, also edited the weekly paper *Zamindar* brought out by the Association of Indian Revolutionaries in Urdu and Persian languages from Tashkent. There his name appears as Mohammad Shafiq, 'Hindustani'" (ibid., p. 75).

Muzaffar Ahmad, who in his memoirs has reproduced most of these documents, Kaushik's comment and also Roy's account of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent, has drawn the following conclusions: "M. N. Roy was compelled by necessity to take the initiative in founding the Communist Party of India in Tashkent... With the Third Congress of the Communist International drawing near, Roy had to found the Communist Party of India in Tashkent, otherwise what could have been his *locus standi* there? Whom could he represent?" (MCPI, pp. 48-49).

Muzaffar Ahmad with his characteristic blind prejudice has added the following subjective comment:

"In the Communist Party of India, there were—perhaps there are still now—members who could not believe that the party was founded abroad. How could they, therefore, reconcile themselves to the fact of its becoming affiliated to the Communist International? These members of the Communist Party of India were still under the spell of nationalism. It is true that Sripad Amrit Dange, one of the first batch of members to join the party in the 1920's, accepted that the party was formed abroad; but he too refused to acknowledge that the party had been affiliated to Communist International. He sent, this opinion of his in writing to me after the publication of my book, *The Communist Party of India and Its Formation Abroad*" (MCPI, p. 57).

After due consideration to the comments of Devendra Kaushik and those of Muzaffar Ahmad and for the time ignoring his tendentious sally at the CPI and at Dange, we have come to the conclusion that there is no reason to disbelieve Roy's statement that the initiative to form the CPI in Tashkent did not come from him. The fact of the matter is that the initiative came from Acharya of the Indian Revolutionary Association which was functioning in Tashkent and other parts of Turkestan. Already in 1919, prior to Roy's arrival, Acharya won the support of the

Muhajirs who had arrived there by then. But once the move was made and the CP of Turkestan was approached for the purpose, Roy as the responsible official of the Turkestan Bureau of the Comintern took charge of the whole thing.

In fact, the formation of the CPI in Tashkent in October 1920 cannot be understood only by reference to Roy as the member of the Turk-Bureau of the Comintern and to the Muhajirs. We have also to take into consideration the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in Central Asia in the latter part of 1919 and in the early part of 1920, especially of M.P.B.T. Acharya, Abdul Rab (Peshawari) and other Indian revolutionaries, members of the "provisional government of India" set up by Mahendra Pratap in Kabul in 1915, who crossed over into Soviet Russia following in the wake of Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah in 1918. Abdul Rab Peshawari and Acharya were in the party of Mahendra Pratap, Barakatullah which met Lenin on 7 May 1919.

Devendra Kaushik mentions that "Abdul Rab is spoken of in Soviet press as president of the Association of Indian Revolutionaries in Tashkent". He states further, "In the Soviet press at that time (1919-20—G.A.) we also read a report of a meeting of Indian settlers in Bukhara at which a decision was taken to establish a branch of Indian Revolutionaries' Association. Some Bengalis also were reported to be present at this meeting. Branches of the association were also established in Samarkand and Baku" (CA, p. 112). Devendra Kaushik thinks that they were deserters from the British Indian army which was then operating in Southern Turkestan with a base in Persia and attempting to foment counter-revolutionary activities there. The same paper in its issue dated 1 October 1920 states that "seven delegates from India participated in the Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East" held on 1 September 1920.

These facts mentioned earlier by us have been repeated in greater detail to make the point that Indian revolutionaries based on Kabul had in 1919-20 shifted their centre to Soviet Central Asia, thanks to the generous help and facilities offered to them by the Soviet government. Their Indian Revolutionary Association was based on the local Indians, who were mostly Sindhī (Shikarpuri) traders or Pathan deserters from the British Indian expeditionary force mentioned above. All this was taking place long before Roy arrived in Soviet Turkestan in August 1920 or in the beginning of September 1920, and even before he arrived in Moscow.

Did Roy form an Indian Revolutionary Committee for this purpose? He makes no mention of any such thing in his memoirs. But Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography speaks of a Provisional Revolutionary Committee of India. He says: "M. N. Roy was supreme in Tashkent in 1920 October when we reached there." According to Usmani Roy was not only in control of the Turk-Bureau of the CI but also of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee of India. Usmani adds: "None of the ex-emigres have written anything about this Provisional

Revolutionary Committee although almost all the Muhajirs had joined it one by one. I knew this well, because I was given to type the Constitution of this organisation and a form to sign "

Usmani does not mention of Acharya and Abdul Rab joining the Revolutionary Committee nor does he indicate what work it did. Even if such a committee existed or was formed by Roy, he does not seem to have worked for the same—the purpose of coordinating the activities of all Indian revolutionaries then in Soviet Turkestan for carrying out the above mentioned plan Roy treated Acharya and Abul Rab with contempt. He called Abdul Rab impostor and Acharya an anarchist (RM, p 464). Roy never mentioned the fact that Acharya was delegate to the Second Congress of the CI together with him and that Moulana Abdul Rab had met Lenin together with Mahendra Pratap and thereafter once again and given Lenin at his request a list of books on India. Elevated to a key position in the Comintern apparatus and placed in charge with ample resources and arms and material to try out a plan of organising an Indian liberation force, Roy went about the task individualistically ignoring Indian revolutionaries and the work they had done in Soviet Turkestan before his arrival there in the autumn of 1920 This brought him in conflict with Acharya and Abdul Rab.

Generally all the Muhajirs have recorded their impression that there were "two parties" functioning among the Indians in Soviet Turkestan in the autumn 1920 when they arrived there. This is put in different ways by Rafiq Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani in their memoirs and by Mohammad Shafiq in his statement to the police quoted in the judgment in Peshawar Conspiracy Case against him. Shafiq says "A quarrel broke out between Abdul Rab and M. N. Roy for suzerainty in Russia" Rafiq Ahmed writes, "Abdul Rab wanted us to join his party so that he should form a provisional government there and get aid from the Russian government. M. N. Roy wanted to form the Communist Party so that he could achieve an international position." Rafiq Ahmed has expressed a similar opinion in his interview recorded by Muzaffar Ahmad in his *The Communist Party and Its Formation Abroad*.

Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography gives a different version of this, i.e. Acharya-Abdul Rab vs M. N. Roy differences This version tallies more with what M. N. Roy has written in his memoirs Usmani says, Acharya accused Roy of spending money meant for revolution on himself and his household and demanded of Roy that he form a sort of committee to conduct Indian affairs "Roy arrived. Acharya then asked him to form a communist party and carry the Indian work through this organisation Roy agreed but laid down the condition that Maulana Rab cannot be admitted."

Roy himself says that the group of Abdur Rab and Acharya called 'itself communist already at Kabul (i.e. early in 1919-20). He says that Rab and Acharya were able to influence the educated minority among the Muhajirs and they put these up to demand the formation of the CPI The reason for this move of Acharya and Rab becomes clear when

we take into consideration two facts: one, that these two had put in considerable revolutionary work before Roy arrived on the scene and two, Roy, when elevated to a responsible position in the CI apparatus, because of his superior grasp of communist principles, began to act in an individualistic manner in the discharge of the job entrusted to him.

So Roy formed the party. He kept out Abdul Rab. Acharya, together with Roy and his wife, Abani Mukherji and his wife, Mohammad Shafiq and Mohammad Ali—these were the original members of the party formed in Tashkent. None of the Muhajir batches which came to Tashkent in September 1920 joined the party at that time. Both Shaukat Usmani and Rafiq Ahmed who gave their own versions of the formation of the party in Tashkent say they did not join the party there as they had not studied communism and understood its principles.

Thus the formation of the party at Tashkent was connected not only with the Muhajirs and M. N. Roy, Indian revolutionaries, who were active in Soviet Turkestan before Roy arrived on the scene, also played a role in its formation and for the reason explained above. So we see Acharya continuing his conflict with Roy inside the party and in the middle of December 1920, we see him challenging the leadership of Roy and wanting the question referred to the higher body.

Rafiq Ahmed states that in the beginning of 1921 a whole batch of Muhajirs who were receiving political and military training in Tashkent were shifted to Moscow to join the newly started Eastern People's University. It is there that they joined the party. He gives the following names: Shaukat Usmani, Ghaus Rahaman, Sultan Muhammad, Mian Akbar Shah, Meer Abdul Majid, Ferozuddin Mansoor and Fida Ali Zahib. Some days later Rafiq Ahmed himself, Habib Ahmad Salim, Fazl Ilahi Qurban and Abdulla Safdar arrived and they also joined the party. He mentions Mohammad Ali and Rahmat Ali Zakaria as already being members of the party.

Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography indirectly confirms this account of Rafiq Ahmed. He mentions most of the groups mentioned above as taking a neutralist position in Tashkent but later in Moscow joining the party.

The question of the CPI formed in Tashkent (October 1920) and Moscow (beginning of 1921) came up again for discussion and controversy when an authoritative delegation of Indian revolutionaries arrived in Moscow in the spring of 1921 to negotiate with the Comintern regarding help to India's liberation movement. We will take up the same in connection with the section on 1921 documents.

In concluding this introductory note to the documents of the early history of the CPI and its formation in Tashkent in 1920 (October-December), it would not be out of place to give a documented account of how the British colonial rulers of India organised their anticomunist police activities, how they laid the foundation of these long before the CPI was formed and began functioning in the country. The government

of India used to publish an annual report to Parliament on India. India in the Year 1919 of this series records that a special staff to deal with the "dangers of Bolshevik agents and propaganda" was established that year. In the Indian police circles in the British days this was known as the (anti) Bolshevik Department of the CID which functioned both at the central and provincial level. It appears the Bolshevik Department continued to function as a part of the Indian police even in the last two decades or more after independence. Marching in our protest demonstration some time in the early 60s in Bombay I casually asked the plain-clothes officer accompanying the procession, as to how many years he had served "About twenty years in the Bolshevik Department", he blurted out. When I remarked "Oh, even after 20 years of independence it is called 'Bolshevik Department'", he was a bit embarrassed but did not deny.

Research workers know that this department of the Intelligence Bureau brought out three successive reports on Communism in India which were then marked "Strictly Confidential" and only meant for the use of high police officers and the provincial governments. They are now available in the National Archives for study. These reports are as follows: (1) *Communism in India, 1919-1924*, (2) *Communism in India, 1924-1927* (Compiled by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, Calcutta, Government of India, 1927); (3) *India and Communism* (Revised up to 1 January 1935) (Compiled by the Intelligence Bureau, Home Department, Government of India, 1933. Reprinted in 1935, Simla, Government of India Press).

We do not know whether the British government in India produced any further reports on the subject after 1935, and up to 1947. Probably comprehensive printed report of the above type dealing with further developments was not brought out by the department, for the "education" of the higher police officer cadre. From the secret Home Department political files of 1937 now available in the National Archives, we learn that the Intelligence Bureau (Home Department, Government of India) was very much worried that a copy of *India and Communism, 1935* (Revised Edition) was missing and it was suspected that the CPI centre functioning underground had managed to get hold of it. It is also recorded in these secret documents of the Indian government that the leakage must have occurred through the UP provincial government which had at that time a Congress ministry headed by Govind Ballabh Pant. One may draw the conclusion from this, that no new report of the type was made up to 1937 and perhaps in the whole period of the Congress ministries. If a further report was made in the period of war it is not available.

The Congress governments of independent India which succeeded the British colonial rulers inherited the Bolshevik Department, and the Intelligence Bureau carried forward its work in the same old ways. Spying on Communist Party activities, conducting vilifying propaganda against it, persecution of its cadres and leaders, their arrests without

trial and launching prosecutions against them—all these continued during the last two decades with varying intensity. For this purpose the British-made (anti)Bolshevik Department was streamlined and expanded by the Congress rulers; it was endowed with a "Research Department" which produced "education" material for the training of anti-communist cadres for the "Labour Branch" of the police as well as for this department.

It appears that this department has produced a two-volume history of the Communist Party of India, from the early beginnings up to the time, when Ajoy Ghosh became the general secretary of the party in 1952. It seems, the first volume came out in 1962. It is printed in Parliament Press and its foreword, which is signed by the Director, Intelligence Bureau, says that for the purposes of the early history of the party the entire book *India and Communism* (Revised up to 1935) has to be incorporated in the volume(!)—continuity with a vengeance! It appears that as far as war against communism is concerned the Congress rulers of independent India think it is necessary to sit at the feet of the former British colonial rulers to learn the art and craft of anticommunist persecution. However these facts which we came to know from certain sources have yet to be checked and verified.

All this is not strictly relevant here. We gave these facts to highlight the main features of the activity of this infamous (anti)Bolshevik Department of the Indian government through the past decades. We have reason to believe that a great mass of valuable material relevant to the history of the CPI and to the beginning and growth of workers' and peasants' movement, not only in the form of weekly and fortnightly police reports and commentaries but also literature, leaflets, pamphlets, files of journals and books produced by the party and the movement, seized at various times by the British police from our offices and residences or otherwise obtained, is lying stored up in the archives and libraries of the Intelligence Bureau in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and Delhi. It is high time that this be now brought to light and transferred to the central and state archives so that it is available to research workers. We now turn to the early beginnings of this department in 1918-20.

The anticommunist activities of the British colonial rulers of India began a few years before the formation of the CPI in Tashkent in October 1920 and before communist groups began functioning in India itself. The genesis of the so-called Bolshevik Department of the British government's CID in India can be traced to the days of the war of intervention against the new born RSFSR which the British imperialists organised from 1918-20. Lord Curzon boasted in 1918 that the armies of 14 ex-belligerent nations were participating in this war of intervention, the aim of which he openly proclaimed was to strangle the Bolshevik revolution in its cradle. For our purposes we need to focus the attention only in the British interventionist activity against the

Central Asian region of the RSFSR which borders on Persia, Afghanistan, India and China

The situation in this region towards the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 was as follows. The Autonomous Turkestan Soviet Republic covering most of the region, which today falls under the Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik and Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republics, was consolidating its power with the fraternal help of the RSFSR of which it was a part. It was flanked on one side by the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva (Khorazm?) which owed their independence to the October Revolution and which were allied with RSFSR for protection. But the Amir of Bukhara and the Khan of Khiva were at the same time keeping secret links with the counter-revolutionaries and the British forces. The border region of the Turkestan Soviet Republic and the Khanate of Khiva, most of Persian frontier, was unsettled. The armed bands of the Turkmen tribes which were operating there were organised by the counter-revolutionary landlords and supported and helped by the British interventionist forces under General Malleson who had pitched his headquarters at Meshed on the Persian border. On the other flank the region bordering on India (Gilgit-Chitral) and China (Sinkiang) was also unsettled. Here the rebel Kirghiz elements were being incited by the provocateurs and counter-revolutionaries. These subversive activities against Soviet Russia were being masterminded by the British Consul-General stationed at Kashgar (Sinkiang, China).

To the south, the Autonomous Turkestan Soviet Republic bordered on Afghanistan, which at that time was friendly to Soviet Russia. Afghanistan under Amir Amanullah, which waged a shortlived war with Britain in 1919, was able to strengthen its independence with the support and help which it obtained from the RSFSR. Indian revolutionaries belonging to the "provisional government of free India" of Mahendra Pratap, which functioned in Kabul in the period of the first world war and after (1915-22), were free to function there. It is across the Afghan border that Indian revolutionaries and the revolutionary groups of the Muhajirs crossed over into Soviet Russia in 1919-20. After the British signed a peace treaty with Afghanistan and recognised its independence in August 1919, the situation remained fluid for some time but in later years, after 1922, the Afghan government under British pressure expelled Indian revolutionaries from Kabul and withdrew the facilities it was offering them. But from 1919 to 1922, Indian revolutionaries and later the Muhajirs were able to cross over from Afghanistan into Soviet Russia and vice versa without difficulty.

Thus we see that in 1918-20 the British imperialists were operating from all the southern frontiers of Soviet Russia with Asian countries. Apart from the direct interventionist activities of General Malleson stationed at Meshed, and the activities masterminded by the British Consul-General in Kashgar which were preparatory to intervention, and the pressurising activities of the British agents in Afghanistan, the British impe-

rialists had sent their spies and agents to operate secretly right into the Central Asian regions of Soviet Russia.

These British spies and agents operating in the Turkestan Soviet Republic in Bukhara and Khiva or in the unsettled region, where armed counter-revolutionary Turkoman or Kirghiz elements were operating, were guided by General Maileson or by Macartney, the British Consul-General in Kashgar, functioning directly under the British Foreign Office then headed by the Marquess of Curzon. One such a spy was Lt. Col F. M. Bailey, who was active in the region in the years 1918-19. We get some idea of his work from his book *Mission to Tashkent* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1946). We learn more from some of his secret dispatches to his principals in London or in New Delhi, which are available in the Home Department political files preserved in the National Archives of India.

These spies and agents of British imperialism were intercepting wireless communications passing between the Soviet authorities in Moscow and those of Turkestan Soviet in Tashkent, they were trying to collect information about the strength, location and movement of Red Army forces in the region. They were keeping clandestine contact with the Amir of Bukhara, the Khan of Khiva, and above all they were keeping watch over Indian revolutionaries, and were trying to find out how the Bolsheviks were sending help to India's freedom movement and spreading communist ideas into India.

There is considerable material in the political files of the Home Department of the years 1918-22, preserved in the National Archives, consisting of army and civil intelligence reports from the agents operating in the neighbouring countries and in Soviet Russia itself. Some of the material is in the form of summaries received from the India Office, London. It is quite likely that the India Office Library in London contains much more original source material about their anti-Bolshevik activities in the years 1918-22 directed against Soviet Russia and against Indian revolutionaries, who were now turning to the new revolutionary power that had now arisen in the East. Much of it must have been destroyed or burnt by the British before they quitted India. But what remains is sufficient to throw light on the genesis of the Bolshevik Department of the British Indian police and central intelligence.

We do not claim to have gone through all this material, but the selected documents of the period we have been able to go through are sufficient to concretise the abovementioned conclusions and give us a picture of the beginning of the anticommunist activities of the British police department and its aims. Let us give a few quotations and references from these documents to illustrate our point.

Earlier in this introduction we have given an account of the Khairi brothers, Jabbar and Sattar, who were the first Indians to contact the Soviet government in November 1918. Report of their address in a political meeting in Petrograd appeared in *Izvestia* dated 7 December 1918. A few days before this they had the privilege of meeting with

the Soviet leaders before whom they presented a report of the conditions of India struggling for freedom. Sverdlov made a brief reply to them. The British intelligence functioning in Soviet Russia obtained 9 months later, i.e. in July 1919, the full text of the communique of the Soviet government regarding the meeting, addressed to the Commissar for Foreign Affairs in Turkestan. The intercepted document was forwarded to Lord Curzon, of the British Foreign Office in London. A copy of this, forwarded to the Government of India, we have in the National Archives (HPD, File of 1924 No. 49 (11), series Nos 275-500). There are no comments noted on this document.

This was probably the earliest British intelligence report of Indian patriots contacting Soviet Russia. As we have stated earlier, V. Chattopadhyaya was the earliest to contact the Bolshevik leaders in 1917 ever before the October Revolution, from Stockholm, but the British intelligence came to know of it much later. As for Khairy brothers, who later never kept touch with Indian national revolutionaries abroad, and still later, after their return to India, became admirers of Hitler fascism, were in Constantinople in the period of first world war, 1914-18, where they, as Pan-Islamists, were doing patriotic propaganda among the British Indian troops on the Turkish front and among Indian war prisoners in Turkey (NAI-HPD, File No. 94/1 of 1925).

The British military and civil intelligence was very active during 1919 and their agents were functioning right inside the Central Asian region of Soviet Russia. This is exactly the time when Lt Col F. M. Bailey was appearing in these parts. In No. 429 of the abovementioned series (i.e. NAI-HPD, File of 1924 No. 48/11), we have a report about the British Consul-General at Kashgar transmitting to Government of India Foreign Secretary secret despatches received from Colonel Bailey from July to September 1919. In a despatch dated 1 September 1919, Bailey was giving bits of news he had gathered from July to September. He knew Russian as well as German. He moved about freely in the guise of a displaced war prisoner. Sometimes he disguised himself as a Russian officer. [In his book Mission to Tashkent he gives a contemporary photograph of himself in this disguise. He appears to have organised a secret monitoring of wireless messages that passed between Moscow and Tashkent, and got them decoded and translated.]

He is reporting that in July 1919 the Soviet government in Moscow suggested to the Autonomous Turkestan Republic that the local Mohammadan people must be represented in the soviets at all levels in proportion to their population; about the movements of Bravin, Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan, and about the Amir's efforts to secure arms and aeroplanes from Soviet Russia; that Mahendra Pratap was proceeding from Moscow to Kabul in August 1919; that earlier Barakatullah worked with Bravin on the Afghan mission; that Indian war prisoners were being freed and indoctrinated with revolutionary propaganda. He says highly anti-British articles about India and Egypt

through their agents active right inside, were scheming to utilise the situation to unfold their interventionist activity.

From these despatches we find that Col Bailey is investigating the possibility of using one Mohammad Amin Beg who is stirring up counter-revolutionary activity among the peasants of Ferghana. The despatches discuss the question of distributing money among Kirghiz counter-revolutionaries in these parts. He is giving detailed information about the armed forces with Amin Beg and those of the Red Army in these parts. Bailey who was no longer able to function openly had gone underground in the beginning of 1920. He is contacting the Amir of Bukhara.

General Malleson is reporting to his principal, quoting his agent's report operating inside, that "Bukhara and Khiva are largely under British direction and their attitude is reserved" (December 1919). There is an interesting despatch of the same month in this series—a secret despatch from secretary, War Office in London to the British mission with Denikin (at Taganrog in Central Asia) quoting a Reuters press report dated 14 November 1919 from Helsingfors that "the Amir of Bukhara had offered Denikin military assistance against the Bolsheviks in Turkestan". The despatch goes on to say that "all possible steps should be taken to prevent the publication of reports of this nature, as should the Bolsheviks get hold of them, the Amir of Bukhara might be compromised" (No. 282 of the above series)

Another aspect of the anti-Bolshevik activities of the British imperialists in those days was intense press and other propaganda among the Muslims of North India and border areas that Bolsheviks were anti-Muslim. They got the Grand Mufti in Turkey to issue an anti-Bolshevik *fatwah*, which they widely publicised in 1917. They initiated a widespread anti-Bolshevik propaganda in the Indian press in 1919-20, in which fantastic stories of Bolshevik massacres of Muslims etc. were put out (cuttings from *Pioneer* dated 19 and 21 January 1920 in No. 325 of these despatches).

All this however did not work. The British imperialists were underestimating the impact of the October Revolution on the masses of the East and overestimating the power of the counter-revolutionaries and of the deposed exploiting classes whom they were bolstering up. By April 1920 their despatches were stating, "Mohammad Amin Beg has concluded armistice with the Bolsheviks, therefore no question arises of giving him any assistance in money, men and material." In the same month the despatch summed up the situation in Ferghana, where Amin Beg was to operate thus:

"...Bolsheviks will shortly be supreme over the whole of Ferghana... Any attempt by us to finance the counter-revolutionaries could only bring discredit on ourselves by failure... In present circumstances the Government of India thinks the wisest course is that of absolute non-intervention and that the Consul-General (in Kashgar) should confine himself to the collection and transmission of information and to such

propaganda as favourable to British policy in the East as he can derive."

This is from No. 435 of the series—from a telegram to the Secretary of State for India from the "General Staff Group" in India dated 5 April 1920.

Nothing much came out of the efforts to incite Muslim religious feelings against the Bolsheviks either. The fatwah of the Grand Mufti received a reply from the *Al Akhbar* of Egypt—in an article—"An Unacceptable Fatwah" dated 19 August 1919. The article says, "Whether the fatwah of Sheikh Bekhite be aimed at Bolshevism in Egypt, the Caucasus or the Muhammadan republics of Russia, we boldly assert that reasoning Muslims cannot agree with the Grand Mufti in his conclusions... Let the Mufti therefore give us his proofs on condition that he points out to his sources on the subject of Russian Bolshevism. Otherwise it would be better if he would keep silent" (No. 276 of the series).

Some time in 1919, Persian ambassador to the Soviet Union arriving in Tashkent gave a statement saying: "The people of Iran and all Muhammadans trust that the Bolshevik revolution will give them freedom from the European pressure." He added in Persian poetic diction: "Russian Bolshevism is for all Muhammadans like the sun which penetrates the prison. In this sun the rose of Ispahan will blossom forth and the narcissus of Shiraz will give out its scent" (same series No. 311).

In the beginning of 1920 the British imperialists were screaming "Bolshevik propaganda is adding fuel to Muhammadan unrest". So their efforts were having exactly the opposite effect. The same thing was happening to their interventionist activities. In January 1920, one Major A. N. Cardew was writing in a secret despatch: "In Siberia indeed it seems a moot point whether the allied intervention and the allied support of such leaders as Kolchak and Denikin has not been the cause or one of the causes of the success of Bolshevism" (same series No. 422).

In February 1920, the people's revolution had won in Khiva and in September 1920 the Bukharan revolution triumphed. In March and September 1920 treaties between the Russian Federation, the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic and the Bukharan People's Soviet Republic were concluded. By the end of 1920, the British imperialists had not only to wind up their interventionist activities in Kashgar as stated earlier but General Malleson at Meshed too had to wind up his shop. During the year 1920, the British rulers were already making the transition from direct interventionist activities in the Central Asian region of the Soviet Union to measures "to protect India against Bolshevik influences".

In February 1920 the British Secretary of State for India sent a policy telegram to the Government of India and to the agent to the Governor-General in the NW Frontier Province, Peshawar. It says the British

government in London "attach the utmost importance to the protection of India against Bolshevik influences, and I am to inquire whether you are satisfied that everything possible is being done in this direction so far as the NW frontier is concerned" (same series No. 390-96).

After this directive from London, we find from the same despatches that foolproof arrangements are being made to track and catch any "Bolshevik agents" infiltrating through the NWF and Baluchistan border, and the possibility of infiltration through the Pamir and Chitral-Gilgit border is being investigated. The NWF government was helped to set up (anti)Bolshevik Branch in the intelligence service. In April we have in the series a document discussing the question of tightening censorship to stop the infiltration of Bolshevik literature and journals through post. It was found that war censorship had ended and it was found difficult to reimpose a general censorship again. So a method was devised by which the Sea Customs Act was used to prevent entry into India of all journals and publications issued by certain named organisations like the Comintern, the communist parties and allied international organisations. This was done by issuing an appropriate notification under the Sea Customs Act.

In this connection there is an interesting comment by Cecil Kaye on the documents in which this censorship question is being discussed. The comment is dated 23 March 1920. It is in No. 436A of the series. He expresses his belief that postal Bolshevik propaganda is a minor danger. The main danger is a prepared soil due to economic pressures—coupled with existence in India of skilled agitators—and these are supplied matter by the British dailies from the *Times* (London) downwards to *Daily Herald*. He concludes: "If the word 'Bolshevism' had never been invented the preaching of extreme communism which is the same thing would certainly be widespread by now; and the only way to fight it is, in my belief, to fight what is its root cause—and the root cause of any agitation in India—high prices."

Some conclusions can be drawn from this comment which will enable us to clarify certain points therein. The British rulers conducted a rabid anti-Bolshevik propaganda in India in 1918-20. It was in the nature of a fabricated lurid picture of "Bolshevik atrocities against religion, men, women and children". Very soon they found that the propaganda does not work in India. Indian publicists countered it by quoting facts and figures as given by London daily papers like *Times*, *Manchester Guardian* and *Daily Herald* about the conditions in Soviet Russia. In the despatches we find that the British authorities found the failure of their atrocity-propaganda and proposed a turn towards a sober and reasoned propaganda against Bolshevism. They commissioned a scribe of the Home Department, one Edmund Candler, to produce a series of such articles which were serialised in the *Civil Military Gazette*, *Tribune* and other daily papers and later produced as a booklet. The booklet was: *Bolshevism, the Dream and the Fact*, by Edmund Candler, C.B.E., Oxford University Press, 1920 (see photostats on pp. 70-71).

ROSEMARY IN THE DREAM AND THE FACT

BY
EDMUND CANDLER, C.B.E.

"The Rosemarys preach a gospel of Violence;
the Blacks a Gospel of Peace. Neither in
Islam nor in Hinduism will the defilers of
religion find a single honest convert."

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A curiously close parallel can be drawn between India of today and Russia of 1917" (NAI-HPD, February 1920, File No. 52)

British rulers knew well that 'Bolshevik' agitators were not going to come from outside. They were going to arise out of the postwar national mass upsurge which was raising its defiant head, despite Rowlatt Act, Amritsar massacre and the worthless Montford reforms, and which was to lead to the first noncooperation movement led by Mahatma Gandhi at the end of 1920. The agitators they were referring to in the quotation given above were not Bolshevik agitators but militant nationalist ones. British imperialists having failed "to strangle the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in its cradle" were now planning to kill the inevitable rise of communist movement in India before it was born!

In 1920 they were looking for the Bolshevik in every militant nationalist. In their 1920 list of pro-Bolsheviks we find such names as the following.

Bepin Charidra Pal renewing his ant-capitalist campaign. Swami Vicharanand forming volunteer corps and Home Rule League—under Tilak (Punjab) Chaman Lal working under direction of Lajpat Rai—taking interest in working-class organisations—an admitted Bolshevik—in touch with Litvinov in London. Mukand Lal writing articles in *Bhawalshya*, Allahabad Kedar Nath Sehgal, connected with Ghadar movement in war period, now talking Bolshevism Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi who has started a paper called *Pratap* from Kanpur which contains an article on Bolshevism.

Any nationalist who was openly refuting or rejecting their anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet propaganda and helping the workers' and peasants' organisations was listed as pro-Bolshevik. For instance they mention one assistant editor of *Pratap* who wrote an article in December (1919) issue of *Sansar* of Kanpur, "describing in detail some of the practical principles of Bolshevism".—He was said to belong to a small group of pro-Bolshevik extremists "who have tried to practise what they preach in the Mazdur Sabha and Kisan Sabha of Kanpur and by their prominent part in the recent mill strikes there" (NAI-HPD, February 1920, File No. 75).

British authorities, in their frantic search for Bolsheviks in India in 1919-20, considered the question whether the earliest Kisan Sabha formed in UP under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Purshottam Das Tandon and which put forward a resolution on peasant demands at the Amritsar Congress (December 1919) was due to Bolshevik inspiration. This resolution stated "that in provinces where zamindari prevails, the ownership of the lands let to the peasants be bought up and be given over to the peasants". But the British Director of Intelligence Bureau, who quoted this and discussed the question, however comes to the conclusion that the demand for elimination of landlordism without compensation is not due to the influence of Bolshevism but at the most that of the Sinn Fein (Irish freedom) movement (NAI-HPD, Proceedings, January 1921, File No. 45-46).

In the Home Department political file of 1920, quoted above, we find some fantastic stories of "Bolshevik agents" being sent from abroad. For instance in No. 103 we have in the report of the Director, Central Intelligence, for April 1920, the fantastic story that Bravin, who was the first Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan till he was replaced by Sourits, "has made his way into India with three Indian assistants and he is working round about Peshawar where a secret conference is to be held" Another report in the same para headed "Indian Bolsheviks" states that "there are now 150 Indians in Moscow and Petrograd who are undergoing instructions in the art of propaganda. When qualified in propaganda, the Indians will return to their native country." This is being reported long before the Hijrat movement started and 200 Muhajirs entered through the Afghan border into Soviet Russia, of which some 26 young men got their training in Tashkent Military School and later in the University for the Toilers of the East in Moscow (end of 1920 and 1921) Very soon they found out that these reports were wrong and this is also recorded in the same file.

Another conclusion is that the British rulers knew well that the "agitators" were not going to come from abroad and that the postwar economic and political mass discontent and upsurge especially after the anti-Rowlatt Act agitation, the Amritsar massacre and the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi had produced them in plenty.

In fact the British rulers knew well that India had no dearth of agitators. Weekly report of the Director, Central Intelligence, dated 5 January 1920 has this gem:

"In Russia a handful of fanatical extremists, well provided with German money, took advantage of the confusion following a complete change of government to exploit economic and political discontent. India today has the example before it and a knowledge of Russian methods. It is not necessary for her to import agitators from outside in order to learn this lesson; political discontent is too obvious to require description.

"Every day fresh strikes are reported of mill and railway workers. No sooner one strike is ended, another begins. Agrarian discontent has so far hardly appeared. The only traces are the murmuring of cultivators against landlords in a few places. The basis of all the strikes is the high cost of living."

The conclusion the British authorities drew from this was: In India agitators "to head the path of Lenin" are not lacking. What stands in their way is "the English government, the *raison d'être* of their Bolshevism. Against this they have declared their intention of using every weapon. They have refused to be placated by Royal proclamation and the Montford reforms. They are fomenting economic discontent and they are trying to improve on Russia by rousing the religious fanaticism of the most virile of Indian population—the Muhammadans.

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In 1919-20 the British government in India had set up a "special bureau of information" under the Director, (Central) Intelligence Bureau, devoted exclusively to tracking Bolsheviks and their activities in India. Most of the information given above is culled from the reports which this bureau produced for the Director, Central Intelligence, or from documents received from India Office. This special bureau was abolished at the end of 1920, its work was taken over by an officer appointed under the director for this purpose. A proper Bolshevik Department under the Central Intelligence and the Indian police was reconstituted perhaps in 1921 *

The reason given by these authorities themselves for the abolition of the special bureau was that the present agitation in India has no semblance to Bolshevism nor—whatever some of the extreme agitators may say—any affinity with it". At the same time they stated that the proximity of "the Bolshevik regime almost at its doors" lends a great support to all forms of revolutionary unrest (NAI-HPD, January 1921, File No 45-46)

This is stated more clearly in the concluding chapter of *Bolshevism—the Dream and the Fact*—by Edmund Candler to which we referred to earlier. The abolition of the special bureau meant only that one phase—the preliminary phase—of the anticommunist activity and organisation of the government was over. It prepared the ground for the next phase. This comes out clearly in the following, which is quoted from the above-mentioned book of the Home Department scribe writing in 1920:

"It is a mistake to think that there is no danger to the country through Bolshevism. National revolutionary movements where they occur will no doubt find Bolshevik backing. In India, as elsewhere, we may expect an increase of strikes, and outbreaks among millhands and railway workers of industrial centres. No country has escaped this

* Replying to Lt Col Sir F. Hall in House of Commons on 23 March 1921, Mr Montagu said "The government of India instituted a special organisation to deal with Bolshevik activities in India and although it would not be advisable to state what had actually been done I can assure my Hon and gallant friend that every step necessary to checkmate them has been taken, I trust, successfully."

This was in answer to the question—whether after the trade agreement with Russia the government had taken action to expel "known Soviet agents" from India.

In a supplementary a member asked, "Is it not a fact that Mr Gandhi lately stated that he would prefer this rule (Bolshevik rule) to British rule, and under these circumstances ought he not to be the first deported as a Soviet agent?"

Montagu—"Leave maintenance of order in India to the authorities there."

(*Indian Annual Register*, 1922-23, p. 43.)

infection. All over the world the atmosphere is charged with the unrest following upon the great upheaval, and everywhere Bolshevik agents are working openly or secretly, to turn these disturbances to account. In India we must prepare for these political missionaries, some of them Indian revolutionaries, who are being trained at Tashkent... In India the Bolshevik agent will not appear at first as a Bolshevik. He will adapt his creed to his audience" (p 77, emphasis added)

This paragraph is already foreshadowing the vicious persecution in the form of Peshawar Conspiracy Cases which the British authorities launched against the young Muhajir patriots who bearing all hardships crossed over into Soviet Russia in search of aid for the freedom movement and got political training in Tashkent and Moscow. In their secret despatches the British imperialists in 1920 freely admit that there is no actual danger of attack on India from Soviet Russia, there is no chance of outside "Bolshevik agents" coming into India, there are Indian Bolshevik agents, i.e. Indian communists in India itself and that Indian communists when they do emerge will be hardly distinguishable from national revolutionaries. But in their public propaganda in India they played up the "Bolshevik danger", harped on the insidious design of Soviet Russia against India. They painted the image of the local "Bolshevik agent"—the emerging Indian communist—as antinational, as agent of foreign power who had nothing to do with the national movement. Their aim was not only to crush the rising communist movement. In their later secret dispatches this second aim is spelt out very clearly.

1917



Virendranath Chattopadhyaya

Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's Contacts with Leaders of October Revolution

Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, an outstanding figure among Indian revolutionaries who functioned abroad in the period of the first world war and who later joined the Communist Party and remained its member till his death in 1937, was the first among Indian revolutionaries to contact the leaders of the October Revolution in 1917. This fact we get from the speech he made in German in Petrograd on 18 March 1934 at the Academy of Sciences (original two typed pages in German were sent by Dr Komarov to Prof Horst Kruger—the Mss. breaks off with the words "the following reply"). We are reproducing its English translation.

He was the eldest son of Dr Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya, who had settled in Hyderabad towards the end of the last century. The galaxy of his brothers and sisters—like the late Sarojini Naidu, Harindranath the poet, Mrinalini and Suhasini who is connected with the Communist Party since the thirties—is well known.

Virendranath left for London soon after passing his BA where he first tried for the ICS and then for the bar but was soon drawn into the activities of Indian national revolutionaries abroad and in 1907 he was already helping Shyamji Krishnavarma in editing the *Indian Sociologist*. He is reported to have attended Stuttgart Congress of the Socialist International (18-24 August 1907) in the company of Madame Cama and Sardar Singh Rasool Rana. He remained in London up to 1909 and went to Paris and helped Madame Cama to edit *Bande Mataram* and *Talwar* up to 1914. He combined this work with extensive travels in Europe, contacting national revolutionary and socialist movements of the countries of central and southern Europe.

Early in 1914, anticipating the outbreak of war between France and England on the one hand and Germany and Austro-Hungary on the other, Chattopadhyaya, like many other Indian revolutionaries abroad, left for Germany. There he took the initiative along with others to secure arms and other assistance from the belligerent German imperialist government to develop revolutionary activities in India against British imperialists and to further India's independence struggle. In the general introduction to this period we have referred to the Berlin Committee of which Chatto was the moving spirit and also to the terms on which Indian revolutionaries sought this aid and to the illusion they harboured.

By 1917, Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin Committee, sensing the end of war and the probable defeat of Germany, were already establishing their committees in Switzerland and Sweden to contact in these neutral countries the leftwing of the international socialist movement which was now agitating for the end of war and for peace without annexations. Chattopadhyaya was in Stockholm in 1917 where he set up branch committee of the (Berlin) Indian Independence Committee. Chatto was very active in putting forward the Indian demand for self-determination and independence before the conference convened by the socialists of neutral countries which was held in Stockholm in those days. It is in connection with these activities that Chatto came into contact with the Bolshevik Trovanovskv. This was some time on the eve of the victory of the October Revolution. The appeal of the Indian National Committee in Stockholm addressed to the Petrograd Soviet, which we have referred to in the general introduction and the text of which we produce here, was probably drafted by Chattopadhyaya. This is confirmed by him in the speech reproduced here, where he says "Already in September 1917 I made contact with Petrograd." He further says that he received an invitation to go to Petrograd. This is also confirmed by Dr Bhupendranath Dutta (ARI, pp 240-45).

Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow for the first time in November 1920 as he says in his speech. This is also confirmed by Dr Dutta. But at that time he did not seem to have important discussions or meetings with the Communist International or Soviet government leaders. M. N. Roy was at that time not in Moscow but in Tashkent. M.P.B.T. Acharya, Barakatullah and Abdul Rab were also then in Tashkent. It may be that during his first visit Chattopadhyaya succeeded in fixing up a meeting of all Indian revolutionaries of the former Berlin Committee with the Soviet leaders some time early in 1921. He refers to the fact that he went to Moscow again at the time of the Third Congress of the Communist International (22 June to 12 July 1921) together with Dr Dutta, G.A.K. Lohani, P. Khankhoje and others. At that time some 14 Indian revolutionaries, including M. N. Roy, Abani Mukherji and Acharya, who were already there from the beginning of 1920 and had participated in the Second Congress of the Comintern, were there meeting among themselves and meeting the leaders of the Comintern, in order to solve their differences as well as the question as to how national revolu-

this meeting did not take place, a fact confirmed by a Soviet writer in *Soviet Land* (No. 3, January 1970).

Chattopadhyaya was in Berlin from 1922 to 1932. Germany of post-war period, before the advent of Hitler, gave some sort of shelter to Indian revolutionaries to carry on their work. Chatto and his colleagues conducted their Indian Information Bureau from Berlin. He guided the Indian Association in Central Europe (Verein der Inder in Zentral Europa) which was a nonpolitical Indian association mostly of youth and students. Roy brought out his *Vanguard of Indian Independence* (1922-24 end) and later *Masses of India* (1925-27) mostly from Berlin.

Among Indian revolutionaries in Germany in the early twenties, Chattopadhyaya was the most popular among the Indian youth and students who were then coming in considerable number for study, especially scientific and technical subjects. He was most accessible to them, helpful in finding them seats in universities and technical institutes. He was to them a sort of a trusted friend, philosopher and guide and was endearingly called by them "Chatto". This writer can confirm this with deep gratitude from his own personal experience in those years in Berlin. Chattopadhyaya probably joined the Communist Party of Germany in 1926 when preparations for holding the First International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism began in Berlin. This was held in Brussels on 10-15 February 1927, and at this congress was founded the League against Imperialism and for National Independence. The Indian delegation was headed by Jawaharlal Nehru (Indian National Congress and Rashtra Seva Dal) and included Chattopadhyaya (Indian Journalists' Union in Europe), M. Barakatullah, Jaya Surya Naidu (Indian Association in Central Europe) and Bakar Ali Mirza (Indian Mailis, Oxford). Chattopadhyaya was elected joint secretary of the organisation at the congress, together with Willi Munzenberg, who was elected general secretary.

The article from *Soviet Land* mentioned above says that "Chattopadhyaya was a member of the Communist Party of Germany" but it does not give the date of his joining the party. When the present writer was making his application to join the Communist Party of Germany towards the end of 1927, he approached Chattopadhyaya, who sent him to Willi Munzenberg for recommending the application. There he found Roy with whom he had become acquainted some time earlier, had conversation with him as a fresh aspirant and had read his books and *Modern India* by R. P. Dutt; but the inner workings of the party were not discussed with him. So it is from the recollection of these events that he can hazard the guess that Chatto must have joined the party in Germany some time before the preparation for the anti-imperialist congress began.

From 1927 Chattopadhyaya was running the Central Office of the League against Imperialism in Berlin, as its joint secretary. He conducted a lively correspondence with Jawaharlal Nehru between 1927 and 1930-31, some of which is in the records of the Meerut Conspiracy

Case (1929-33). The Second World Congress of the League was held on 30 July 1927 and Chattopadhyaya was again elected the secretary.

Chattopadhyaya's articles on Indian questions began to appear in the *International Press Correspondence* from 27 February 1930. He has contributed some 28 articles to this international organ, which was the unofficial organ of the Communist International, appearing in some five languages and distributing the material of that organisation. Chattopadhyaya's last article in this journal appeared on 3 December 1932. The article from Soviet Land, already referred to, states, that Chatto "while in Berlin took part in the activities of the communist movement with Dimitrov as his immediate superior". Dimitrov was functioning underground in Germany on behalf of the Comintern between 1930-31 to 1933 autumn when he was arrested by the Hitlerite regime in their infamous frame-up—the Reichstag Fire Trial. But Chattopadhyaya left Berlin for Moscow towards the end of 1932.

This fact as well as some facts of his subsequent life up to 1937 we got from Dr Lydia Karunovskaya of the Institute of Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Leningrad. Chatto was functioning as the head of the Indian department of the institute, while he continued his political activities. Dr Karunovskaya, who is now 80 and has long retired from her post in the institute (head of the Indonesian department) had in her possession all the papers and documents left by Chattopadhyaya, some of these have been handed over to the Chattopadhyaya section of the Dimitrov Museum of Revolution in Leipzig.

Chinmohan Sehanobis went through the latter part of the material preserved in Leipzig and brought back a list of the same. From the list one sees that the material consists of articles, papers, newspaper clippings, books, periodicals, letters, etc. which belong to the period from 1932 to 1937. In this material we find the full printed report of the congress of the League against Imperialism (Brussels, February 1927), some materials about Indian revolutionaries functioning in Istanbul (Turkey) in the mid-twenties; articles by Roy explaining why he split from the CI published in the journal of the "communist opposition" in Germany, articles in *Inprecor* and other international papers exposing M. N. Roy, cuttings from *Daily Worker* and some Indian papers about the Meerut Case and the solidarity campaign for the release of Meerut prisoners, other political material on India. Here we also find an Urdu translation (Mss) of the "Draft Platform of the Communist Party of India" which appeared in the *Inprecor* at the end of 1930 and was distributed at the Karachi session of the Congress (March 1931) in English and two Indian languages as an illegal publication. This shows that Chatto was politically active for the Communist Party of India in the period from 1932 to 1937 in Moscow.

Virendranath Chattopadhyaya died some time after 1937. Dr Karunovskaya told Chinmohan Sehanobis: "In 1937 one day they came and took him away and in 1940 I was informed that he was no more." M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* writes: "It is reported that in his last days

1. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's Speech

For the first time I heard of Lenin in the summer of 1910. As students in London, we were then and for years thereafter national revolutionaries. We were in contact with British Labour leaders like Keir Hardie and Hyndman and knew nothing of the epoch-making event of the foundation of the Bolshevik Party at the London conference. In July 1910, I joined the colony of Indian political emigrants in Paris, as I had to flee from England to escape the impending arrest. One of the emigrants was a woman—Bhikaji Cama—who came from a well-to-do family in Bombay, but who had devoted herself, with everything she had, to the Indian independence movement. She became a socialist and became a member of the French Socialist Party, which I also joined in September 1910. She participated in the Stuttgart Congress (of the Socialist International) in 1907, as a delegate. In his first report on this congress, Lenin mentions the presence of Indian delegates without names (CW, 13, p. 82—G.A.). Bhikaji Cama used to tell us about Lenin and the Russian social-democrats and of their attitude towards the questions of war and the right of self-determination of nations. But none of us understood at that time the enormous significance of the split in the Social-Demo-

Chattopadhyaya was also nonpolitically employed in Leningrad about the same time as Mukherji. It would be a cruel irony of fate if ultimately they both were victimised by revolutionary hysteria. Chattopadhyaya certainly deserved a better fate" (p. 301). Roy's assertion that Chattopadhyaya and Abani Mukherji were nonpolitically employed in Moscow in the thirties is not correct. His suggestion that both were unjust victims of the arbitrary violations of socialist law in the Stalin period of later days is confirmed from other sources. His last sentence only reveals his mean and petty minded bias against Abani Mukherji.

Among the stalwarts of Indian revolutionaries abroad, who were active in the period of the first world war, who functioned from Berlin, Constantinople, Kabul and San Francisco, and were closely connected with revolutionary activities in India in the year 1915-16, Chattopadhyaya was the one who, though he came to the Communist Party later than M. N. Roy, remained loyal to it to his last days.

1. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's Speech

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cratic Party and of the role of Lenin. We moved in the circles round *L'Humanite* (Jaures, Longuet, etc.). It appears to me now very strange that Comrades Mikhail Pavlovich and Charles Rappoport with whom we often met never said a word to us about Lenin. Years passed and I heard about Lenin in the years of war in Switzerland and about his famous travel across Germany in a sealed wagon. As I came to Stockholm in the beginning of May (1917) I found there a strong (concentration) of international emigrants. I enquired if Lenin was still in Stockholm. It was a great disappointment for me that I could not meet Lenin then. Already in September 1917 I made contact with Petrograd. Then came the October Revolution, which became a decisive factor in my life thereafter. In 1918, Comrade Wronski gave me a telegram calling upon me to proceed there (to Petrograd). Because of various reasons, which would take me too long to mention here in detail, I could reach Moscow only in November 1920, Roy had already reached there in 1919 (not correct—Roy reached Moscow in the middle of 1920—G.A.). I came to Moscow again for the Third Congress (of the Comintern) with a number of Indian comrades—Dutta, Luhani, Khankhoje and others. We were not yet organised in the party and hoped to do this in Moscow. But Roy had surrounded himself with a net of adventurers and imperialist agents. Unfortunately he enjoyed then the confidence of the then leading comrades of the Comintern. We on our part began a determined struggle against the Roy clique. Roy had the support of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin and Radek. He became known through his colonial theses (supplementary—G.A.) at the Second Congress (which were really reformulated by Lenin). We had to leave Moscow after four months without being able to convince the comrades about the real character of Roy and his people. (Today Roy is in the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and we others are members of different parties.)

Against the then ultraleft standpoint of Roy, we wrote some theses on the Indian question and sent them to Lenin.

Lenin sent us the following lines written in his own hand in English :

"To Comrades Chattopadhyaya, Luhani and Khankhoje,
I have read your theses with great interest. But why new theses? I will soon talk to you on this.

Fraternally yours
N. LENIN"

Our theses were politically wrong on many vital points. We waited with great longing for an interview with Lenin. But our opponents had sabotaged this, and we returned with regret without having had the opportunity to speak to the leader. Lenin's letter was preserved with my books in the office of the Anti-Imperialist League in Berlin. Hitler's police had forcibly closed the office of the League and confiscated everything and also the valuable letter of the leader. I am interested in the question, whether Lenin ever came in touch with Indian revolutionaries before the (October) Revolution. I turned to Krupskaya with this enquiry and received the following reply. . . . (Here German Mss breaks off—G.A.).

(18 March 1934 The German text received from the Head of History Department, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, through Dr Kruger.)

2. Chattopadhyaya's Letter to Krupskaya and Reply

Academy of Sciences of USSR
Leningrad

25 January 1934

Moscow,

To
Com. N. Krupskaya

Dear Comrade,

I want to get information about certain questions concerning Lenin's life about which I did not find any mention in your *Memoirs* or in other biographies. I would feel deeply obliged if you can find time to answer the following questions.

(a) When Lenin was in London, did he come into contact with any Indians? If so, will you be able to give some details?

(b) In the Stuttgart Congress of 1907, two Indians had participated. One of them, a woman Bhikaji Rustom Cama, spoke on the conditions of the Indian people. Did Lenin meet her personally and talk with her about India?

(c) Did Lenin try before the October Revolution—particularly during the period of 1912-1917—to get in touch,

either personally or through other comrades, with Indian national revolutionary emigrants?

I am writing an article "Lenin and India" in a Lenin anthology of the Academy of Sciences for which I urgently need the abovementioned information.

I would be very much grateful to you if you could give me answers to my questions at your earliest convenience. You could of course reply in Russian.

In as much as you do not know me personally, I could give reference of Comrade Pyatnitsky or Malinovsky.

Brotherly yours,
CHATTOPADHYAYA

Leningrad
Academy of Sciences
Virendranath Chattopadhyaya.

7 February 1934

Respected Comrade,

Unfortunately, I can remember nothing on the questions that interest you:

In London, in as much as I remember, there was no meetings with (any) Indians. In Stuttgart Congress I was not present and Vladimir Ilyich did not speak anything about it to me. Most likely efforts to establish connections were made during the period of the imperialist war but I do not remember it.

With brotherly greetings,
N. KRUPSKAYA

3. Telegram of Indian National Committee of Stockholm to the Petrograd Soviet

Revolutionary Russia is striving for a lasting peace on the basis of the right of self-determination being guaranteed to all nations. But the instructions given to Mr Skobelev deputed to Paris do not correspond to this striving, as these totally miss the fundamental question of India, Egypt and Ireland. Indians, Egyptians and the Irish are thoroughly imbued with the conviction that complete self-determination is their inalienable (natural) right. The freedom movement among these peoples has reached such a sweep that a lasting peace is impossible without a positive solution of their problem. In the name of fidelity to the ideas of the Russian revolution and in consideration of the tremendous significance of emancipated India to Russia and to the whole world, we request the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets to put up a dauntless fight against the shameless and cruel imperialism of England both in the forum of the Paris Conference and in the course of the peace negotiations.

(*Der Neue Orient*, Vol 2, 1917, p. 107.)

1918

First Two Indians to Meet Lenin and Address an International Meeting in Petrograd

Strictly speaking the documents connected with Jabbar and Sattar Khairy, who were Pan-Islamists from the very beginning and later on their return to India became supporters of Hitler fascism, do not belong to the history of the CPI. They are introduced here to show that some of the Pan-Islamic patriots, who operated from Constantinople in the period of the first world war and thought in terms of winning India's independence with the help of German imperialism, turned to Soviet Russia after the October Revolution. Not all the Muslim patriots who functioned from Constantinople in those days became nonpolitical or profascists like the Khairy brothers in later life. Barakatullah remained a close associate of Chattopadhyaya and Mahendra Pratap to the last. Abdul Rab Peshawari came near to the Communist Party though he did not join it, Obeidullah (Sindhi) was running the Kabul Congress Committee till 1922 when the Amir of Afghanistan expelled the Indian revolutionaries. He was active till the mid-twenties in Berlin and Constantinople. Khairy brothers, despite what they became in later years, must be given credit for being the first to undertake the hazardous and long journey in the difficult days when the war was just ending, and to contact the leaders of the October Revolution. In this sense they are the forerunners of the Muhajirs who two years later undertook a similar journey and some of whom like Abdul Majid and Ferozuddin Mansoor became founder members of the party.

Much has already been written about the life and career of the Khairy brothers and it is not necessary to add anything here. One may mention here another reference to them in the confidential documents of the British government's (NAI-HPD File No. 94/1 of 1924) from which

we learn that the Khairy brothers applied to the British government in London for a passport to return to India in 1925 and also asked for immunity from arrest. A letter from India Office dated 12 February 1925 states "Passports be granted to brothers Abdul Jabbar and Sattar Khairy, at present in Berlin, for a direct journey from Berlin to India, with permission to visit Turkey en route" but no immunity was promised. In the same file we find the remark of Petrie, the Inspector General of Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India, referring their "crime" of "attempting to seduce soldiers from their allegiance while on active service". This obviously refers to their work in Constantinople and Turkey in the period of the first world war and in an indirect way confirms the account Dr Bhupendranath Dutta gives about them in his book to which we have referred in the general introduction.

One may mention another fact about the Khairy brothers given by Dr Bhupendranath Dutta in the footnote on the same. He mentions that the two brothers formed an Indian Muslim Committee in Constantinople and in 1917 they proposed to the German government on behalf of the committee that the warlike frontier tribes round about Kashmir could be persuaded to declare war on the British if the Germans could supply arms and other assistance. The German government referred the proposal to the Berlin Committee which rejected the same, noting that this may lead to Hindu-Muslim complication. Now a message sent by an "Indian Muslim Committee" of Constantinople to the kaiser on his visit to the Turkish capital some time in 1917 is found in German Foreign Office publication (*Der Neue Orient*, Vol. I, 1917, p. 108). The text of the message is as follows:

"The incomparable victories of Your Majesty on all fronts, on the sea, under water and in the air, the firm bond that exists between Your Majesty's government and the Khilafat and in the last instance the continuous setbacks and consequent weakening which England, the oppressor of humanity and the blood-sucker of India, Egypt and of a number of small independent nationalities, have filled not only our hearts with gratitude for Your Majesty, but also the hearts of 80 millions of Mohammedans in India and of their brothers and co-sufferers—the Hindus in India.

"The great hospitality shown by Your Majesty to the Indian war prisoners in Germany, the setting up of a mosque for the convenience of their prayer have unmistakably made the love for Your Majesty strike deep roots in their hearts; and above all the unforgettable words Your Majesty spoke at the graveside of the great Shlabedin continue to echo and reecho in the hearts of every Mohammedan both at home and abroad.

"We see in Your Majesty the great fighter for humanity, and the defender of the rights of the weak and the oppressed nations—which at one time dominated the culture of the world."

This message is probably the handiwork of the Khairy brothers. It

talks of Khilafat and Islamic sentiment, though it takes its stand on Hindu-Muslim cooperation in the struggle of the oppressed nation. It bestows fawning praise upon the German kaiser Prof M. Habib who knew them personally at Aligarh in the thirties says that one brother (Jabbar) used to call himself the caliph of India and formed a secret society among the students with Pan-Islamic ideas as their programme, while the other brother (Sattar), who was the professor of German in the Aligarh University, used to make propaganda for Hitlerism among the students. Thus it appears that in the case of the Khairy brothers, their visit to Soviet Russia in November-December 1918 was a passing fancy and adventure, while Pan-Islamism and love and alliance with German reaction seem to be the abiding values that moved them.

The names given in the contemporary Soviet press quoted here and also in the document in the State Archives of the October Revolution of the USSR and in the article in *Problems of Orientology* (Russian, 1959, No 2) are Prof Ahmad Harris and Prof Mohammad Hadi. Names in the National Archives documents are Jabbar and Sattar Khairy. Dr Bhupendranath Dutta gives the same names. Weighing all the facts, as stated in the general introduction, the editor has come to the conclusion that Prof Ahmad Harris and Prof Mohammad Hadi are pseudonyms of Jabbar and Sattar Khairy. When the matter was referred to Prof M. Habib, he was not able to confirm either the pseudonyms or the fact that Khairy brothers went to Soviet Russia in November 1918. But when the entire evidence was placed before him he came to the conclusion that 'Khairy brothers' suppressed these facts. They did not mention these facts to Prof Habib nor in their statement to the police when they were arrested as "nazi agents" at the beginning of second world war. Khairy brothers are not living now.

1. Proclamation by the People's Commissaries in Moscow Addressed to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in Turkestan.

As stated in the general introduction this communication passing from Moscow to Tashkent was intercepted by the British spy net functioning in Soviet Central Asia in 1918-19, under ace spies like Lt-Col F. M. Bailey, and sent on to Lord Curzon who manned the British Foreign Office then. The covering letter transmitting this communication (of 25 November 1918) in English translation is dated some time after 6 July 1919, which shows that British intelligence was not very efficient. This translation has not been compared with the original Russian text in Central State Archives of the October Revolution of the USSR, Folio 1235 and also published in *Problems of Orientology* (Russian, 1959, No. 2, Ref. given by Anand Gupta: IL, p. 45). The passages quoted by Anand Gupta from the statement of Khairy brothers and from the brief reply made by Yakov Sverdlov tally in content with the translation given here.

In the middle of November 1918 two representatives of Indian Musalmans, residents of Delhi, of learned professions, by name Sattar and Jabbar, arrived here and presented themselves to our leader, Lenin. They explained to him many things referring to India and the East. On November 25th they appeared at a meeting in the Central Executive Committee of Soviets and asked for assistance from Soviet Russia, with a view to helping in freeing India from English servitude, and also with a view of distributing

throughout India information as to the Soviets and their principles. In reply Sverdlov, President of the Soviets, answered as follows:

"I have listened with the greatest pleasure to all that has been said by the Indian representatives. We hope that all countries now in servitude will quickly come in contact with Soviet Russia. Our call for reform and progress will reach India, and the other lands of Asia, so that those peoples which are now in slavery to the British will arise and throw off the chains of their slavery, and will join in their efforts towards freedom with other peoples and nations. We empower the Indian representatives to convey the best wishes of the Executive Committee, and our hopes for the speedy freeing of the Indian people. The representatives will not be kept long here by us, but will be allowed to return as quickly as possible to India."

Thereupon, the representatives communicated to the Central Executive Committee the following message:

"To the leaders of the Russian revolution, our comrades and brothers: We have the honour to send our congratulations in the name of 70,000,000 Musalmans. The Russian revolution gives us hope of our own liberation. The world does not know what is happening in India. What the English are doing in India has for its object the strengthening of imperialism, and the extraction of as much wealth as possible from India. They tolerate innumerable injustices only for the purpose of keeping India in subjection. The duty of every man is to assist in the liberation of our people, and to help it to win its rights. During the war the English have wrongfully accused the Indian people of criminal acts of various kinds, and although they call themselves democrats, yet not less than four-fifths of the population of India, numbering 325,000,000 people, are in a condition of most abject servitude. In their own interest, they declare that the people of India are contented with their government, that these people fight for them and that their government is the best possible for India. They have declared this throughout the world, and have stated that, as a reward for the loyalty of India, they are granting her res-

possible government. We declare to you, comrades, that many Englishmen even are against this reform, and that Indian as well as English papers are full of complaints.

"When the people of India were suffering from famine, the English were obtaining from India big revenues. They held the people in ignorance, deprived them of education and threw into prison thousands of those who spoke for their fellow countrymen. The people were dying from sickness, and no aid was given to them. They keep at our expense a huge army for the protection of the country, but do not allow us to carry arms; the regulations regarding the acquisition of arms are so strict that even it is forbidden to carry a long knife. It is beyond us to describe the actual condition of affairs, and yet the actual conditions of life of the Indian working men are harder still. They have to work 12 hours a day in the heat of summer, in order to make 15 to 25 kopecks per day, and they have to fulfil all demands upon them and cannot refuse. It is impossible to describe the oppressions which workmen and peasants have to bear. The Indian people would themselves wish to take measures so that workmen should not be compelled to work against their will, but the danger of oppression does not permit of their taking such measures, since the government of the country is not in the hands of their fellow countrymen. The position of India before the war, and during the war, was the same. The most unjust regulations were invented with a view to condemning thousands of Indians to imprisonment on the slightest suspicion; many were hanged without trial, and many were driven out of their country. During the war the English brought in certain regulations under which thousands of Indians were punished. Comrades, what is going on in India is kept a strict secret from the outside world. By deceit the people were compelled to join the army to fight against their co-religionists, to kill them or be killed by them. Those who joined the army did not know where they were to be sent; many battalions and regiments learnt their destination only when they were on board ship and ready to sail; some of them only learnt their destination on arrival there. The English forced the people to

subscribe large sums to military loans, while the people cannot pay what it wants to pay, it having been previously decided how much each shall pay. It is a pure myth that the English are suited for the government of India; in reality it is an insult to India to say so.

"Taking all into account, and speaking in the name of India, we declare that if possible war should be declared on the English. Although the people of India are kept in complete servitude as a result of the introduction of various measures said to be for the protection of the country, yet the people have several times revolted, though they have not been able to throw off the British yoke by their own forces. People in India have asked the world to grant freedom to them, so that they can manage themselves with their own laws, and not with those which have been drawn up for them by the English. The Russian revolution has made a great impression on us, and the people of India are fighting against the one-sided acts of the English, who were obliged on 20 August 1917 to call a special Session of Parliament; they sent the Secretary of State to India, and other representatives to India, in order to learn under what conditions responsible government could be granted to India. That which these emissaries wrote in their report in no way satisfied the idea of responsible government—by this measure they are giving nothing to the people of India; all force for managing the country will remain in the hands of the English; the papers are forbidden to publish anything. In one paper of 8 June 1918, the opinion was expressed that the supporters of the English government are even against the acceptance of such a form of government as will give to the people anything more than the right to follow what is going on in the country, and we are to submit to such violent edicts. It is impossible for us to tell you of those oppressions and injustices which the Bengalis are suffering. For instance, regulations drawn up without previous agreement with the working classes have been published in the papers and made law for everyone to submit to. The people has to submit to the order of the government even in such questions as education and medical supplies.

The people of India have no voice in the preparation of laws or measures which the English give them. The former governor of Bombay, in his speech of 10 May 1918, declared that the attainment of the object sought in the granting of responsible government for India was only thinkable under the English aegis, and that its success is entirely dependent upon maintenance of the English guidance in India. And thus, although the English call themselves democrats, yet they are tyrants trampling upon justice. The Indian representatives had wished to apply to Parliament for their demands, but they were not allowed to go to England to express themselves there. Indians were imprisoned in America and in France; they were expelled on the application of the English Consuls from Japan, Switzerland and Denmark.

"Comrades, we have taken up much of your time, but in concluding our message, we declare that much that should have been mentioned here has not been uttered by us. In general, we must say that the Indian people have been under the yoke of the English people for many, many years, during which time the English have drawn immense revenues, on which the power and happiness of the British empire rests. The time has come for India to free herself; following what had been done in Russia, the people in India are striving to win freedom for themselves—70,000,000 Indian Musalmans must join up, and will follow along the path of general progress: they are aware of what is going along in the world, and have been strongly impressed thereby. If the people of India shall follow other countries, the English will be compelled to leave India to itself, since they will be unable to maintain the former system of government. We pray Russia to hold out to us the hand of help, that we may gain freedom. It is the duty of Russia to help to the utmost the whole world in winning freedom and right. Just glance at the map and you will see that 325,000,000 Indians are the slaves of others and we believe that your help will make it possible for us to free ourselves from our slave masters."

2. Speech of Jabbar Khairy at the International Meeting Held in Petrograd on 5 Dec. 1918

I am speaking in the name of 330 millions of Indian people who are being oppressed by British imperialism. I express my deep gratitude to you for making it possible for me to visit your country, to see with my own eyes the success achieved by the Russian proletarian movement, and for the opportunity offered to me to speak to you about my country.

It is a pity that I don't have time to acquaint you with the harrowing details of British oppression on the multi-million Indian people. Please realise, if it was difficult for you to cope with your own autocracy, then it is much more difficult for the suffering Indian people to fight against an alien imperialism. In India, millions die of hunger every year, in spite of the fact that our country is fertile and it is not facing the same situation as is being faced by Russia now, when she is surrounded from all sides by enemies who have raised a blockade. Decay of the Indian people is exclusively the result of the fact that the British imperialists are squeezing out of us the last drops and exporting to Europe everything that is necessary for us.

I have heard and I know what a horrible fight is being waged against the Russian liberation movement, but I am

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convinced from the speech of the preceding orator, the British representative, that the Russian people have not only enemies but also allies—and such allies are the people on whose behalf I am speaking. These much-tortured, suffering people aspiring for liberation from imperialist oppression understand the aspirations and the sufferings of the Russian people, share their ideals and hope that a moment will come when they will really be able to help us. I draw your attention to the following. Comrade Fineberg, representative of the British people, spoke before me... I do not consider him to be an enemy but, on the contrary, a cofighter. Not the British people but the British imperialists are the enemies of the Indian people and the British working people. Once again I thank you for your hospitality, for expressing the confidence that justice, freedom and socialism will be established on the earth by the united efforts of all the oppressed peoples.

(*Izvestia*, 7 December 1918, also quoted by P. C. Joshi, *Link*, 16 June 1968.)

1919

References to India and Colonial Question at the Inaugural Congress of Comintern

On 2 March 1919, the International Communist Conference began its work in Moscow. 52 delegates from 35 organisations of 21 countries of Europe, America and Asia took part. Representatives of the oppressed peoples of Persia, China, Korea and Turkey participated for the first time as full delegates at such an international conference. Representatives of India or of Indian revolutionaries were not present at the congress.

After preliminary discussion the conference unanimously adopted two documents: the theses presented by Lenin on bourgeois democracy and dictatorship of the proletariat as well as the guidelines of the Communist International outlining the tasks of the communist parties. These were adopted as the basic programmatic documents of the international communist movement and on 4 March the conference converted itself into the First Foundation Congress of the Communist International.

The First Congress did not adopt any document on the colonial question, but the guidelines of the Communist International stated in clear terms that, "The Comintern considers it its obligatory task to establish a permanent and close bond between the struggle of the proletariat in the imperialist countries and the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples in the colonies and semicolonies and to support the struggle of the oppressed peoples 'to facilitate the final breakdown of the imperialist world-systems'" (CI-SHO, pp. 63-64).

The congress which concluded on 6 March 1919 adopted apart from these two basic documents a number of resolutions and a manifesto. It adopted a resolution "On the International Situation and the Policy of

Entente" and a "Manifesto of the Communist International to the Proletariat of the Whole World".

We are giving two extracts from these two documents which go to show how the main ideas and principles of the Theses on the Colonial and National Question which were adopted at the Second Congress of the Communist International held next year (1920) were already projected here in an embryonic form.

1. On the International Situation and the Policy of Entente

... In the postwar period, the allies are openly trampling the principle of self-determination... by refusing that right to Ireland, India, Egypt... About India and Egypt even the question does not appear on the agenda of the committee meetings of great powers or in the allied press...

"Peace policy" of the five large masters of the world... consists in pursuing "secret diplomacy", of deals among the powerful financial trusts behind the back and at the cost of the working millions of all countries...

The "principle of self-determination" is being openly substituted by "division of disputed territories" among the ruling states and their vassals.

Alsace-Lorraine is joined to France without any opinion poll of the inhabitants; Ireland, India and Egypt are denied the right of self-determination. Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are carved out by using armed forces. A shameless deal is afoot for dividing European and Asiatic Turkey. German colonies are being distributed and so on.

(Protocols and Materials of the First Congress of the Communist International, 2-6 March 1919, Russian, pp. 151 and 159.)

2. Manifesto of the Inaugural First Congress of the Communist International

... The last war, which was not least a war for colonies, was at the same time a war fought with the help of colonies. The colonial populations were drawn into the European war on an unprecedented scale. Indians, Negroes, Arabs and Madagascans fought on the European continent—for what? For their right to remain the slaves of England and France. Never before has the infamy of capitalist rule been shown up so clearly; never before has the problem of colonial slavery been posed so sharply as it is today.

Consequently there has been a series of open insurrections, revolutionary ferment in all the colonies. In Europe itself Ireland reminded us by bloody street battles that it still remains and still feels itself an enslaved country. In Madagascar, Annam and other countries the troops of the bourgeois republic had more than one revolt of colonial slaves to suppress during the war. In India the revolutionary movement has not subsided for a single day, and has lately led to the greatest workers' strike in Asia, which the British government met by ordering its armoured cars into action in Bombay.

Thus the colonial question in its fullest extent has been placed on the agenda, not only on the order papers of the

diplomats in congress in Paris, but also in the colonies themselves. Wilson's programme, at its best, is meant only to change the commercial label of colonial slavery. The emancipation of the colonies is possible only in conjunction with the emancipation of the metropolitan working class. The workers and peasants not only of Annam, Algiers and Bengal, but also of Persia and Armenia, will gain their opportunity of independent existence only when the workers of England and France have overthrown Lloyd George and Clemenceau and taken state power into their own hands. Even now the struggle in the more developed colonies is more than the struggle for national liberation; it is assuming an explicitly social character. If capitalist Europe forcibly dragged the backward sections of the world into the capitalist whirlpool, then socialist Europe will come to the aid of liberated colonies with its technology, its organisation, its spiritual forces, in order to facilitate their transition to a planned and organised socialist economy.

Colonial slaves of Africa and Asia! The hour of proletarian dictatorship in Europe will also be the hour of your own liberation!

(CI-JD, pp. 42-43.)

Lenin Meets Delegation of Indian Revolutionaries

In the general introduction we have given sufficient details about this historic meeting with Lenin of a delegation of Indian revolutionaries composed of Mahendra Pratap, M Barakatullah, M.P.B.T. Acharya, Abdol Rab Peshawari, Dalip Singh Gill and Ibrahim which took place on 7 May 1919. We are reproducing here an extract from Mahendra Pratap's book *Reflections of an Exile* where the author gives his account of the interview.

We have not come across any official Soviet record of this interview. Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume No. 29, which gives at the end a chronology of Lenin's activities for the year 1919, does not mention this meeting. Our only source of information is Mahendra Pratap's book and interviews with him of Soviet journalists. For instance we have in *Soviet Land* (published by Soviet Embassy in New Delhi, No. 8 of 1967) Mitrokhin's interview with Mahendra Pratap 1. Andranov's article "The Awakening East" in *New Times* (No 10 of 1968) we have further details of the same. In this article the author mentions a news item appearing in *Izvestia* in the month of May (date not given) according to which Barakatullah at this meeting placed before Lenin unofficially the request of the Afghan government for Soviet help against British imperialism.* In this connection the last para of Mahendra Pratap's account quoted here is significant. It is interesting to note that Indian revolutionaries and their meeting with Lenin played some part in establishing diplomatic

* See Chinmohan Sehanobis's article in *Kalantar weekly* (Bengali), 6 February 1971: "Russian Revolution and Indian Revolutionaries Abroad", No 11.

relations between Soviet Russia and Afghanistan in 1919. Friendly Soviet-Afghan relations facilitated the work of an Indian revolutionary centre functioning in Kabul to keep contact with the Soviet Union and the Comintern. That is exactly the reason why the British government brought pressure on the Afghan government to expel Indian revolutionaries from Kabul and in which they succeeded towards the end of 1922.

3. Mahendra Pratap on Interview with Lenin

This is the story of 1919. I had come back to Russia from Germany. I stayed at the palatial building of the former sugar-king. Moulana Barakatullah could establish his headquarters at this place. He was in very good relation with the Russian Foreign Office. When there was scarcity of food in the city we were right royally feasted. My Indian friends who had started on this journey with me from Berlin could also come and gather here. One evening we received a phone-call from Soviet Foreign Office. I was told that someone was coming and that I should hand over my pamphlets to the man. This I did. Next morning was the day when I with my friends were to meet Comrade Lenin at the Kremlin. Prof Vosnesensky took us to the ancient Imperial Palace of Moscow. We passed through the guards. We went upstairs. We entered a big room with a big table at which was sitting the famous Red Leader Comrade Lenin. I being at the head of the party, entered first and proceeded towards the figure sitting right before me. To my astonishment the man or the hero stood up suddenly, went to a corner and fetched a small chair and put the chair near his office chair. And as I arrived by his side he asked me to sit down. For a moment I thought in my mind, where to sit, asking myself.

should I sit on this small chair brought by Mr Lenin himself or should I sit on one of the huge easy chairs covered with morocco leather. I decided to sit on that small chair and sat down, while my friends, Moulana Barakatullah and others, took their seats on richly upholstered chairs.

Comrade Lenin asked me, in what language he was to address me—English, French, German or Russian. I told him that we should better speak in English. And I presented to him my book of the *Religion of Love*. To my astonishment he said that he had already read it. Quickly arguing in my mind I could see that the pamphlets demanded by the Foreign Office a day earlier were meant for Lenin himself. Lenin said that my book was "Tolstoyism". I presented to him also my plan of having notes repayable not in gold or silver but in more necessary commodities such as wheat, rice, butter, oil, coal, etc. We had quite a long conversation. Mr Lenin had a few words to say to all of us. So much so that Lenin also asked a couple of questions of a servant of Moulana Barakatullah who remained standing a bit far. Prof Vosnesensky also did not sit.

It was after this interview that the Foreign Office decided that I must accompany His Excellency Mr Sourits, the first Russian Ambassador to the Court of Afghanistan. My job was to introduce Mr Sourits to King Amanullah Khan. Of course, the official position of the ambassador needed not any introduction of some private character. But it was thought that as I was a personal friend of the king I could better plead personally on behalf of Red Bear.

(RE, pp. 44-47.)

Barakatullah's Interview to "Petrograd Pravda"

Mohammad Barakatullah (born c 1859), a citizen of Bhopal, belongs to the early generation of Indian national revolutionaries headed by Mahendra Pratap, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and others. He was probably drawn into revolutionary activities when he was in England as a young man in 1887-97 where he met Shyamji Krishnavarma. According to his own statement he was in exile in Japan between the years 1905-12. In Japan he was teaching Urdu in Tokyo University; that is why he is known as Professor Barakatullah. In Japan he published a journal called *Islamic Fraternity*. After the first world war broke out he shifted to San Francisco, which was the centre of the Ghadar Party revolutionaries. In 1915 Barakatullah received an invitation from Mahendra Pratap from Germany to proceed to Afghanistan. The well known "Indo-German" mission headed by Mahendra Pratap and Dr Hentig was proceeding to Kabul via Constantinople to persuade Afghanistan to join the war on the side of Germany and the central powers. Mahendra Pratap mentions that he met Barakatullah in Constantinople and they proceeded to Kabul together in 1915. Dr Dutta mentions that Barakatullah persuaded Shaikh-ul-Islam to issue a fatwah calling upon Muslims of India to work with Hindus in their joint struggle for freedom against the British (ARI, p. 74).

Barakatullah was a member of the "provisional government of free India" formed by Mahendra Pratap in Kabul in 1915, as its prime minister. He remained in Kabul up to the end of the war in 1918. In March 1919 or some time later, Amanullah ascended the throne after the assassination of Habibullah, and broke with the British proclaiming Afghanistan independent. At that time Barakatullah enjoyed the trust of Amanullah, who sent him to Soviet Russia, as "ambassador extraordinary"

to establish friendly relations with that new revolutionary power. Dr Dutta mentions that Indian revolutionaries stationed in Afghanistan in these days advised Amir to assert its independence by establishing its diplomatic relations with all powers, which the British so far prevented that country from doing (ARI, p. 80).

Barakatullah was present when Mahendra Pratap met Lenin together with M P B T. Acharya and Abdul Rab Peshawari on 7 May 1919. Barakatullah's servant was also present at the interview and according to Mahendra Pratap he was able to speak Russian so Lenin had a brief talk with him (RE, pp. 45-47).

The documents produced here were written in 1919, when Barakatullah was active in Central Soviet Turkestan and Bukhara. Barakatullah was well versed in Islamic theology, but was not a pronounced Pan-Islamist. He was a sincere national revolutionary who believed that socialist Soviet Russia was a reliable friend and ally of the eastern Muslim nations fighting for their freedom against British imperialism. That is why Barakatullah had a good standing with the Soviet leaders and he was asked to write the pamphlet produced here in part.* This pamphlet was translated in the various languages of Soviet Central Asia and distributed by the Soviet government.

Dr Dutta states that Barakatullah was in Geneva at the end of 1919 when some negotiations were going on there between the representatives of the Soviet government and those of the allied powers. At that time Dr Dutta says Turkey was weakening in its alliance with Soviet Russia and was under pressure from the British. Indian and Egyptian revolutionaries, particularly Barakatullah, made it clear to the Turkish delegates in Geneva that if Turkey drifted to the allies, she would lose the support of the eastern nations fighting for their freedom against the British. Dr Dutta says Barakatullah did this at the request of the Soviet plenipotentiary in Geneva and succeeded in temporarily stopping Turkey's drift and this further strengthened his friendship with Chicherin.

Barakatullah remained in Soviet Russia up to 1922. In 1920 Mahendra Pratap mentions his meeting with him (ML, pp. 71-72). In 1922 he shifted to Berlin and was actively associated with those Indian national revolutionaries headed by Chattopadhyaya, Dr Dutta and others who were keeping in touch with Soviet Russia. Dr Dutta mentions how Chicherin had made an arrangement to keep contact with Barakatullah (ARI, p. 131).

* After 3 June 1919, Lenin wrote to G. V. Chicherin, "What have you done to help this Indian?—in publishing his article?—in other respects?" (CW 44, p. 244). This is further clarified in the Notes (No 238, p. 512): "Lenin's note to Chicherin was written in connection with a letter from M. Barakatullah, an Indian professor, who wrote about the struggle against British imperialism in India, and asked that his article on Bolshevism be published 'in order to win the hearts of the Moslems to the support of Bolshevism'."

Cecil Kaye, the British intelligence officer, in his confidential publication *Communism in India* says that Barakatullah published an Arabic paper, *Al Islah* from Berlin in July 1925. Barakatullah closely cooperated with Chattopadhyaya when the latter was preparing for the first congress of the League against Imperialism which was held in February 1927 at Brussels. He was one of the seven-man Indian delegation to that congress which was headed by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Towards the end of 1927 he left Germany for New York in a German boat together with Mahendra Pratap. Mahendra Pratap describes how Barakatullah got ill in New York and how he got worse as they crossed the continent from New York to San Francisco and how he died there (27 September 1927) mourned by the fraternity of Indian revolutionaries of the Ghadar Party (RE, pp 105-6).



Prof Barakatullah

4. "Afghanistan and India"

(Talk with Prof Barakatullah)

Professor Barakatullah who came to Moscow to establish permanent relations with Soviet Russia is the chief of the Afghan mission.

Professor Barakatullah is an Indian, member of the Muslim League in Delhi and member of the Indian National Congress and Professor of Philosophy and Literature.

"I am not a communist nor a socialist", Prof Barakatullah told us, "but my political programme at present is the expulsion of the English from Asia. I am an irreconcilable enemy of European capitalism in Asia whose main representative is the English. In this I concur with the communists and in this respect we are genuine allies.

"From 1909 to 1914 I could not remain within English territories. During that time I worked in Japan and published an agitational newspaper *Muslim Unity*.

"After the outbreak of European war I was compelled to leave Japan and shifted to San Francisco where in 1915 I received an invitation from the well known Indian nationalist Pratap (who visited Russia soon after the October Revolution) to proceed to Afghanistan, where we reached in the same year and I stayed there since then till March 1919.

"Among the secret documents published by the Russian Soviet government in the Blue Book, on pages 74-92 are printed documents relating to how the English demanded our expulsion from Afghanistan and how Amir Habibullah deceived the British, declaring that we had left Afghan borders, and received generous reward from the English.

"In March 1919 after Habibullah was assassinated and Amanullah, who hated the English, ascended the throne, I, as one of the most trusted persons of the new Amir, was sent to Moscow as 'ambassador extraordinary' for establishing permanent relations with Soviet Russia. With this the new Amir cancelled the alliance treaty with the British, according to which Afghanistan was obliged not to enter into diplomatic relations with any other country than England.

"Afghanistan, just as Russia, is not a capitalist state, and it is highly possible that the parliamentary system will not take deep roots in these countries.

"Just now it is difficult to say how future events will take shape. I only know one thing, that the well known appeal of the Soviet government of Russia to all peoples calling on them to struggle against capitalists (and for us, capitalist is a synonym for the foreigner, more accurately the Englishman) has created on us colossal impression. Even bigger impression was produced by the annulment by Russia of all secret treaties imposed by imperialist governments and the proclamation of the right of peoples however small they may be to self-determination.

"That act united around Soviet Russia all the exploited peoples of Asia and all the parties, even parties far away from socialism. These acts predetermined and brought nearer the Asian revolution.

"The English immediately understood the consequences of the new Russian slogans and adopted all measures in order to seal all the routes from Russia to India and, first of all, seal Afghanistan which has the same conditions as India, and plug the access from Russia to India. Hence the advance of the English to Meiy, attempt to conclude agreement with Bukhara, and finally the creation of Ferghana

front under the auspices of the Russian whiteguards in order not to let the Russian influence into eastern China.

"However easy it is possible to occupy territory and conquer small peoples but it is impossible to suppress great ideas—I think that the English are already late.

"The ideas of the Bolsheviks, which we call 'Ishtakiat', have caught on among the Indian masses, and the small sparks of active propaganda were enough to light the grandiose revolutionary fire in all Central Asia.

"In India have matured the same prerequisites of revolution which existed in Russia in October 1917. India has been, in the every literal sense of the word, under military regime already for 33 years, and the Indian people are exploited by the English worse than the workers in other countries. In India till the war, individual provinces starved, now the whole of India starves, for our food stocks were sent to feed the allied armies. Illness, in part plague and small-pox, killed in 1918 alone 8 million people according to English statistics. Already for a year economic strikes and open uprisings have been flaring up in one part or other of India. Bengal province is the most revolutionary, that is, so to speak, the intellectual centre of revolution; the most active Indian province is Punjab which has borders with Afghanistan.

"Under normal development of events", Professor Barakatullah said in conclusion, "it is to be expected that this summer will be decisive for the liberation of India."

(*Petrograd Pravda*, 1919, No. 10(8/5))

Barakatullah's "Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations"

This is the concluding part of the pamphlet (Persian) **Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations** written by Prof Barakatullah. The English translation is by Capt Samad Shah, a British-Indian officer. The text is preserved in the National Archives (NAI-HPD, 1919, File No. 2295) as an enclosure in the letter of the secretary of the Government of India to the Chief Secretary to Government of Great Britain, dated 20 October 1919. The Persian pamphlet was proscribed by the British Indian government and its entry into the British India was prohibited.

In the foreword to the pamphlet "Moulavi Barakatullah" is described as "a well known leader of religious thought and recognised scholar as not only recognised authority on ecclesiastics but also well versed in social and political science". It is also stated that "prior to the world war he was in Japan and later he visited Germany and Turkey with a view to freeing Mohammedans from the tyrannical yoke of the British".

Verbal changes have been made into the text by the editor to bring out the sense better.

Devendra Kaushik refers to this appeal to the Muslims of Russia and states that the same "was translated into several languages of Soviet Asia and widely distributed among the Muslims of this region" (CA, p. 111).

Dr Dutta also refers to this book when he says "while in Moscow he wrote a book for the Bolsheviks". Dr Dutta makes an uncharitable remark that he (Barakatullah) discovered "Bolshevism in Quran!" Actually Barakatullah says that the idea of equality and brotherhood of man is common to all religions and in that sense he explained the significance of zakat and bait-ul-mal in Quran—an institution reminiscent

of primitive communism which was later destroyed or distorted by the despot Muawiyah.*

Dr Dutta says that relations of friendship which developed between Barakatullah and Chicherin in 1920 were maintained later. In April 1920 the Soviet delegation headed by Chicherin went to its first international conference in Geneva with the representatives of the capitalist countries, which the supreme command of the allies had called to regulate trade and credit relations in the context of economic rehabilitation of their respective countries. Dr Dutta records that the Barakatullah was present in Geneva then and in touch with Chicherin. After that Chicherin had fixed that Barakatullah who was with leading Indian revolutionaries in Berlin could contact him (Chicherin) through the Soviet Ambassador there, viz Krestinsky (ARI, p. 31).

The concluding part of this booklet given here in full ends up by quoting from a call of liberty and equality by Lenin and the Soviet government. This is the famous message from V. I. Lenin, chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and J. V. Stalin, People's Commissar for Nationalities Affairs, to all Working Moslems of Russia and the East, dated 3 December 1917, the full text of which is available in English in *Milestones of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1967* (Moscow, 1967, pp. 33-35). The portions quoted by Barakatullah tally with the corresponding paragraph in the above official text, only the translation differs. We have given corresponding paras in the above-mentioned official translation in the footnote to the document for comparison.

* Muawiyah (c. 610-85), first Syrian Caliph, of the Ommayyad dynasty with their capital in Damascus after A.D. 661.

5. Concluding Portion of "Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations"

The problem of the misery of the nation and of the more-than-necessary happiness of a very small section of society was always the most difficult problem which human intellect ever faced in every clime and in all periods. Plato, that divine man, recommends abolition of private ownership with logical conclusiveness in his book called *Republic*, as solution of this problem. Plato, the divine, puts the reins of government in the hands of the nation's preceptors who are political-philosophers and philosopher-politicians.

These men bring up and train the young generation in different arts and sciences according to their individual capacity, thus ensuring supply of necessities of life and the means of comfort for all, at the expense of all. Ownership becomes public and collective, measures of sustenance, pleasure and gratification are equalised; and individual members of the nation grow so enlightened—owing to progress of true education—that all their actions and conduct spring from wisdom and all their mental and spiritual longings and will conform to the good of nature. This was the basic principle on which Karl Marx founded the lofty structure of socialism in the 19th century of the christian era, building it on the experience of bygone nations.

Divine religions also, primarily and essentially, have been revealed for putting an end to destitution, indigence of toilers and misfortune and oppression among mankind, and for happiness, peace, freedom, brotherhood and equality of Adam's children. The sum and substance of all true religions is this grand law. "Desire for your neighbour what you desire for yourself." This law is similarly expressed in the Jewish scripture and the Bible because all men are descendants of Adam and brothers of one another. The last of the prophets (Mohammad), on whom the greetings and salutations, has mentioned "brother" in place of "neighbour". The third, fourth and fifth books of the Jewish scriptures refer to crafts, professions and the methods of cultivation, for he held a thanks-giving prayer saying, "Oh, bait-ul-mal (treasury), stand witness that I filled you lawfully and exhausted you lawfully."

But thousand pities that Muawiyah, son of Abu Sufyan, looked upon the bait-ul-mal as his personal property and behaved despotically, on the strength of gold, destroying the brotherhood and the spirit of Islam. The despotism which Muawiyah made reign supreme in the world in the 31st year Hijri assumed a feature, at once dangerous and horrible. In the following centuries, the masses of the nations experienced such bloodshed, cruelty, oppression and repression at the hands of their sovereigns that they had not ever seen even from their enemies. By the misuse of bait-ul-mal funds, which was the cornerstone of the despotism of the Moslem rulers, the Islamic countries were ruined. Moslems were deprived of learning and education and were reduced to the level of the meanest animals.

In this 20th century of christian era all Mohammedan countries were exploited and plundered by the imperialist British, the autocrat Russian emperor, and the pillaging French and Italians. Only in A.D. 1908 it was the constitutional Turkish government that lit the burning taper in a graveyard. To extinguish this, the tyrannical British, Russian and French governments brought about world war in A.D. 1914. The exalted government of Turkey under guidance of Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha and Djemal

Pasha—as also the Ottoman nation—during the 4 years of war, displayed such heroism and magnificent spirit of self-sacrifice, for maintaining the liberty of the nation and the independence of the country by sacrificing millions of lives, that human history will forever record it with honour.

But a thousand pities that the traitorous Sherif of Mecca intrigued with the British, and in the month of Shahban 1334 raised the standard of rebellion against the Khilafat government. He started plotting secretly, and egged on by the British and their usurping allies, he made friends with the short-sighted party, the "Ittilaf", in the heart and centre of the Khilafat. That sole lamp of the Islamic graveyard was extinguished also by other despotic Moslem rulers whose religious faith consisted in the selling of their countries. The British, French and Italians used the republican government of North America as a tool for their own plans of usurpation, and got the upperhand over their opponents, helped by American troops and the treachery of the Bulgarian nation. Promises and pledges of Wilson, the president of the American republic, viz that the principle of self-determination of all nations should be applied for the establishment of universal peace, and on the strength of which principle, the Ottoman government declared an armistice with its opponents. All this was violated in the most shameless and flagrant manner, thereby dishonouring the American president.

Not a single independent Moslem state remains today. This is the result of despotism instituted by Muawiyah thirteen hundred years ago. Yes, the sacrifices borne by Turkish martyrs—in money and life—have not been wasted. The sinking of the ship of autocracy of the Russian emperor was also due to the efforts of the undying Ottoman nation.

There is no cause for despair. Following on the dark long nights of tsarist autocracy, the dawn of human freedom has appeared on the Russian horizon, with Lenin as the shining sun, giving light and splendour to this day of human happiness. That noble scheme, first visualised by the divine Plato over 2,000 years ago, and handed down by way of trust from generation to generation in his *Republic*, has today

been put from theory into action and introduced into the field of reality by Lenin, gaining great currency and favour. The administration of the extensive territories of Russia and Turkestan has been placed in the hands of labourers, cultivators and soldiers. Distinction of race, religion and nationality has disappeared. Equal rights to life and freedom are ensured to all classes of the nation.

But the enemy of Russian republic is British imperialism which holds Asiatic nations in a state of eternal thralldom. It has moved troops into Turkestan with a view to felling the young tree of perfect human liberty just as it is beginning to take root and strength. Time has come for the Muhammedans of the world and Asiatic nations to understand the noble principles of Russian socialism and to embrace it seriously and enthusiastically. They should fathom and realise the cardinal virtues taught by this new system, and in the defence of the true freedom they should join Bolshevik troops in repelling attacks of usurpers and despots, the British. They should, without loss of time send their children to Russian schools to learn modern sciences, noble arts, practical physics, chemistry, mechanics, etc. Oh, Muhammedans, listen to this divine cry. Respond to this call of liberty, equality and brotherhood which Comrade Lenin and the Soviet government of Russia are offering to you:*

* "Moslems of the East, Persians, Turks, Arabs and Indians, all those whose bodies, property, freedom and country had been commodities in the hands of the grasping vultures of Europe, all those whose countries the plunderers who had started the war want to share among themselves.

"We declare that the secret treaties of the deposed tsar on the seizure of Constantinople, the treaties that have been confirmed by the deposed Kerensky, are now annulled and destroyed. The Russian Republic and its government, the Council of People's Commissars, are against the seizure of foreign territories: Constantinople must remain in the hands of Moslems.

"We declare that the treaty on the division of Persia has been annulled and destroyed. Troops will be withdrawn from Persia as soon as military operations stop, and Persians will be ensured the right freely to decide their own destiny.

"We declare that the treaty on the division of Turkey and on depriving her of Armenia has been annulled and destroyed. Armenians shall be

"Oh, Muhammedan residents of Russia and all eastern countries, we are announcing to you that the secret treaties as made between the deposed emperor and other states as regards the occupation of Constantinople, as well as treaties ratified by the dismissed Kerensky, have been annulled and torn up. Soviet Russia and its government, i.e. the Assembly of National Representatives, have forbidden conquest of foreign countries. Soviet Russia therefore considers it essential that Constantinople should remain in the hands of the Moslems.

"We also announce that the treaty regarding the partition of Persia is also torn up and destroyed, and directly the war stops, the Soviet government of Russia will withdraw its troops from Persian soil, to enable Persians to protect their rights and form a government after their own will and desire.

"We also announce that the treaty as regards the division of Ottoman territories and the separation of Armenia from the Ottoman empire is similarly torn up and destroyed. After the war Armenians will be given power to form a government for themselves according to their own choice.

"Oh, brethren! You should not recoil from the Russian nation and the present government of Russia. You should rather shun those savage wolves of Europe who stand ready to conquer countries and enslave people, who have usurped

ensured the right freely to determine their political destiny as soon as military operations cease.

"Enslavement awaits you not at the hands of Russia or her revolutionary government but at the hands of the predators of European imperialism, of those who have turned your homeland into a 'colony' which they are looting and robbing...

"Comrades, brothers, we are advancing towards an honest, democratic peace firmly and resolutely.

"On our banners we bring liberation to the oppressed peoples of the world.

"Moslems of Russia!

"Moslems of the East!

"On this road towards a renewal of the world we await your sympathy and support."

(Milestones of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1967, Moscow, 1967, pp. 34-35.)

your homes and turned them into their own colonies. These infamous wolves and shameless usurpers who are occupying your homes should be driven out."

This worthy address ends in these important sentences: "Comrades and brothers, let us tell you: we are bent upon acquiring an honourable peace.

'We have inscribed on our banners our intention to bring to the oppressed nations of the world liberation and justice.

"Oh, Muhammedans of Russia, Muhammedans residing in eastern countries, we expect every one of you sincerely to follow this righteous path and to give active assistance in the realisation of our object."

Tashkent, 5 March 1919

MOHAMMAD BARAKATULLAH

1920

Shafiq's Pro-Communist Journal in Tashkent

The original of the only issue of *Zamindar*, the translation of which we give on page 135, is preserved in the Communist Party Archives in Tashkent. We are indebted to the CC of the CP of Uzbekistan for making available to us the photostat. The translation of the Urdu text is made by Hajrah Begum.

As stated in the general introduction, only one issue of this paper, which was both in Urdu and Persian and was edited and written by Mohammad Shafiq, came out in May 1920. This is proved by the fact that it is signed at the end by "Mohammad Shafiq—Hindustani" and also by the fact that this paper figured as an exhibit in the Peshawar (Communist) Conspiracy Case—Crown vs Mohammad Shafiq—the sessions court judgment of which was pronounced on 4 April 1923. This judgment quotes two portions from this paper, one outlining the 9-point policy of the paper and the concluding para ending with signature of the author. These tally exactly with the corresponding portions in the text given here, only the translation differs slightly.

We get the following facts of his life from the statement he made before the district magistrate, Peshawar, on 10 December 1923 when he was arrested on entering India.

Mohammad Shafiq was the son of Abdul Haleem of Akora, Peshawar district. As a young man he was serving as a clerk in the irrigation office at Peshawar. He left his job and proceeded to Kabul as one of the early Muhajirs under the influence of the anti-Rowlatt act agitation of those days. This was in May 1919.

Three months after his arrival in Kabul, i.e. in July-August 1919, he met Moulana Obaidullah, who had come to Kabul earlier in 1915

together with Mohammad Ali (Sepassi) and Rahamat Ali Zakaria and others and who were part of the 'provisional government of free India' of Mahendra Pratap. In November 1919, Mahendra Pratap, Abdul Rab and Acharya arrived in Kabul from Soviet Russia. From them Shafiq came to know that the government of Soviet Russia was noting with interest and sympathy the recent developments in the Indian independence movement and that the Muhajirs would get all help if they went to Russia.

Hearing this Shafiq with three other early Muhajirs crossed over into Soviet Russia—via Mazar-e-Sharif route and seems to have reached Tashkent some time in January or February 1920. Shafiq and his companions were received with great hospitality and after two months' rest they were given facilities for work. They then produced the first and the only issue of the paper *Zamindar*.

The Hijrat movement which was a trickle at the end of 1918 had become a flood by the summer and autumn of 1920. In 1919 and in the early months of 1920 Indian revolutionary associations were functioning in Soviet Turkestan and there was one in Tashkent. Shafiq says in *Zamindar*:

"In Tashkent there is a group of Indians. We are grateful that the Soviet government has permitted us to form an organisation and allowed us to publish an Urdu-Persian paper to place our thoughts and wishes before the Soviet and Indian public."

Shafiq says in his statement before the district court: "A few days later (July 1920) M.P.B.T. Acharya and the Indian Revolutionary Association, i.e. Abdul Rab's party, were invited by the Soviet leaders to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International." He says further that Acharya, Roy and Abani Mukherji were admitted to the congress as delegates while he got a visitor's card. This is not quite correct. M. N. Roy was a delegate to the congress on the mandate from the Communist Party of Mexico, while M.P.B.T. Acharya and Abani Mukherji are listed as delegates from British India. There being no CPI then, Acharya is mentioned as a delegate from Indian Revolutionary Association of Tashkent while Abani Mukherji is mentioned as a "left socialist". This information we get from the Russian protocol of the Second Congress and from the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of the CC of CPSU. But the point here is to note that Shafiq was a visitor at the Second Congress of the CI.

I. Translation of Urdu Section of "Zamindar"

Title page of *Zamindar* of Jamiat Ahrar Hind—weekly paper in Urdu and Persian—Editor: Abdul Majid; Evanoy, Tashkent, dated May 1920.

CONTENTS

Introduction

Importance of journals in free countries and in the oppressed countries:

In India thousands of journals exist but good papers—"the voice of the people"—are silenced by British terror or come out under different colours.

Outside India many organisations which were set up for aiding revolution in India are bringing out papers. *Zamindar* will also be such a paper. It is the first paper of its kind. A new sun has arisen after the Russian revolution, many nations are benefiting by it. All people have the right to benefit as the revolution was not for Russia alone but for all. The ultimate objective of *Zamindar* is to acquaint Indians with this reality so that they may make use of this light profitably.

Another object is to create interest amongst the people

of Bukhara and Turkestan concerning Indians and therefore the paper is in Urdu and Persian.

It is proposed to publish the paper in English also but there are certain difficulties in the way. Attempts for English edition will however continue.

The foundation of the paper is laid by the present Indian community in Tashkent and with the cooperation and sympathy of qualified persons it will improve.

Inaugural Article

India—a land of numerous arts and sciences, of thousands of philosophers, of lakhs of valiant people—had at one time been from north to south and east to west a land of glory, courage and daring. It can be seen from the history and geography (of the world) what heights were attained by India. It was known as the "choice of the nations". This title was a suitable one as India had collectively everything the world produces.

What is the condition today? Poverty and famine, no riches, no grandeur, no knowledge and no crafts. The land has not stopped producing wealth but this is hoarded in the treasury of British capitalists and rulers.

These conditions have come about recently. 1857 was the accursed year which witnessed the end of India's glory when the freedom of 300 million people was snatched away, when loot held sway. The land is the same but thousands die yearly due to famine.

More than half the population do not have one full meal in 24 hours. The land of philosophers and learned men has now less than 5 per cent literates. The land of the brave is a helpless slave of foreigners. There is no freedom of speech and in the land famed for its swords and arms not even an arrow can be found. What was once the treasury of riches lies in ruins.

We shall place facts before the public. Half a century has passed away, Indians have realised the truth and are prepared to sacrifice their lives for it.

At different periods the motherland has sent forth its sons to different countries. There are dozens of movements

in the country and all have as their starting point "free India from exploitation and oppression".

In Tashkent there is a group of Indians. We are grateful that the Soviet government has permitted us to form an organisation and allowed us to publish an Urdu-Persian paper to place our thoughts and wishes before the Soviet and Indian public.

The paper shall fulfil the following responsibilities:

(1) Stress the importance of the Indian problems for the USSR.

(2) The paper shall attempt to keep all eastern revolutionary organisations under one centre.

(3) It will give the present Russian government valuable advice regarding different revolutions.

(4) The paper will invite all revolutionary organisations formed in Tashkent to agree to a useful programme.

(5) It will conduct discussions on the atrocities committed by the British in India.

(6) It will portray the inner revolutionary struggles of India in the true colours.

(7) It will train Indian workers in revolutionary zeal and educate them in the methods of the Russian revolution.

(8) It will promote Russian-Indian relations which are suppressed by the cruel British government.

(9) It will contradict all writings published by British writers and journals under the title of "Opposition to Communism" and will discuss all the benefits of communism.

We hope that friends and sons of India will study carefully the paper and will encourage us by their sympathy and valuable contributions.

Appeal to the Oppressed People of the East

Respectful greetings from the organisation of Indian residents in Tashkent. India with heart and soul hopes for the fulfilment of your desires. India is so sick of the oppressive repression that it is determined to plunge into the battle.

Oh, sufferers of the east dreaming of freedom from iron chains, it is your duty to follow example of India.

India has offered thousands of sacrifices for freedom.

India, which had been baked and burnt in the fire of repression, calls upon all the oppressed nations. It is your duty to heed its call and act.

India proclaims by beat of drum that if you wish to free your homes, liberate your countries from the grip of tyrannical oppression, come, sympathise and unite with us, struggle for India's liberation and your freedom will automatically be won. It is India's freedom alone on which depends the honour and safety of your homes.

India declares—I am a victim of British rapacity, my blood has been sucked by unholy and treacherous British rulers and is being turned into poison gas, guns, swords and aeroplanes for destroying your countries. Rich with booty it hopes to bribe (its opponents) to enable it to crush the entire world through inhuman exploitation.

Unless you go to the source of the poison, the roots of exploitation, unless you help India to its freedom, can you yourself possibly be free? Never.

Oh Brethren of Bukhara, is not your Amir a pawn of British greed? As long as he has British backing, can your land be secure? Never.

Oh, Iranian brothers, is not your Shah busy touring Europe and Great Britain? Has he not sold his freedom to the British? Is it possible that your country can throw off the chains of British bondage unless the backbone of British power is broken? Impossible.

Oh, leading members of Soviet Russia, is your country really secure? Is it not being invaded from Poland? Are you satisfied with (conditions of) Baku and Azerbaijan? Do you receive recognition in Iran? Never, never. Then, who is opposing you? Who is against giving publicity to your programme? Enquire and discover that it is the hostile kingdom of Britain.

It is only when you understand this that you will heed the call of India.

Again we ask, is your country secure, can your working class government continue in power? For seven years you have valiantly fought your enemies and defended your motherland but for how long? For how long can the country

sustain this backbreaking burden? How long will the working class party strive against this accursed government?

If you would but listen to us, tear up the roots of this hated regime, dry up its source. Help Indian revolution. Help to free India and then see whether you are truly liberated or not. Of a surety you will be.

Victory to India!

MOHAMMAD SHAFIQ—HINDUSTANI

Roy's First Manifesto to Indian Revolutionaries

In the general introduction we have already referred to the early career of M. N. Roy. Here we shall give a chronological account of his early life up to his arrival in Berlin in the beginning of 1920 and the circumstances in which he wrote this first manifesto addressed to Indian revolutionaries.

M. N. Roy was born in 1889 in the village Urbalia, 24-Parganas, Bengal, in a Brahmin family of Bhattacharyas and Narendranath was his original name. Early in his teens he joined one of the revolutionary organisations in Bengal in the days of swadeshi and boycott movement (1907?). The police record credits him with organisation of political raids including the ones at Chingripota and Netra in the years 1907-9. In January 1910 he was arrested in Howrah gang case along with a number of outstanding revolutionaries of Bengal. He was in jail from January 1910 to February 1911 and in this period he developed close friendship with the famous revolutionary Jatin Mukherji (Bagha Jatin).

After his release Narendranath was in the same organisation with Jatin Mukherji and Jadu Gopal Mukherji. By 1911-12 there was a large circle of revolutionary groups round Jatin and by 1914 on the eve of the first world war it was joined by the Barisal and Atmonnati groups. It was this powerful consolidation that carried out the successful raid on Rodda and Co's consignment of Mauser pistols leading to the seizure of a large number by the revolutionaries. Narendranath himself did not participate in this raid but was the recipient of one of the weapons when the seized stock was distributed among the activists.

After the outbreak of the first world war and the formation of the Berlin Committee to procure arms and resources from the German

government for revolutionaries in India, Kedareshwar Guha returned from Berlin via the USA with a message from the committee to Rash Behari Bose informing him of the arrangement made with the Germans. This was in October 1914, when Rash Behari Bose was in UP and the Punjab preparing for the attempted uprising scheduled to take place at the end of February 1915, and which was based on defections in the various regiments. This message was communicated to him by Jatin Mukherji who was accompanied by Narendranath Bhattacharya. This was much before the D day.

The unsuccessful uprising of February 1915 (Ghadar 1915), which was characterised by the martyrdom of Kartar Singh Saraba and Pingle, and of a large number of patriotic sepoys court-martialed in the various regiments, was timed with several armed actions in Bengal. Garden Reach motor raid in February 1915 was one of them. Narendranath was arrested in connection with this raid and later released on bail. Undaunted by the setback in the Ghadar 1915, the heavy repression, and series of Lahore conspiracy cases that followed, Bengal revolutionaries led by Jatindranath began preparing for a second revolutionary attempt.

In March 1915 Jitendranath Lahiri arriving from Berlin brought another message from the Berlin Committee giving details of a plan to deliver a consignment of arms to revolutionaries in India. The prospects of securing arms and aid from German sources quickened the preparation for a second revolutionary attempt and a secret meeting of the revolutionary groups led by Jatindranath was held to plan out the details. Narendranath was chosen as a messenger to Batavia to contact the Germans. He jumped bail and sailed for Batavia in 1915.

This account of M. N. Roy's early career as a member of Bengal revolutionary group and particularly as an active member of Jatindranath's revolutionary organisation is based on facts given in Uma Mukherji's *Two Great Indian Revolutionaries* (Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1966). Roy in his *Memoirs* has not dealt with this early period. Perhaps he wanted to write of his "experience during those years"—"not as the autobiography of an individual, but as a part of the history of the time" (RM, p. 4), but was not able to do it as he passed away even before he finished his *Memoirs* which go only up to 1923.

The circumstances under which he left India for the first time is confirmed by him in his *Memoirs*. Only the date he has given is wrong:

"Clandestine conference led to the formation of the General Staff of the coming revolution, with Jatin Mukherji as the Commander-in-Chief.

"The job of finding money for initial expenditure, entrusted to me, was soon done according to plan" (RM, p. 3).

But his statement that he "left for Java—my first trip out of the country" before the end of 1914 cannot be true. This is pointed out by Uma Mukherji, who bases herself on the fact that "the general staff of the coming revolution" with Jatindranath at its head was only formed

after the failure of the February 1915 Ghadar and the decision to send Narendranath to Batavia was taken thereafter and he sailed for that destination in April 1915 and not end of 1914.

Narendranath returned from his first trip in June 1915 and as a result of the arrangements he made with the German authorities he contacted, German money was made available to Bengal revolutionaries during these months. The question was of getting German arms. In this connection Narendranath was able to arrange with Germans for the diversion of S.S. *Maverick* with the arms cargo which was scheduled to unload at Karachi, to Raimangal on Bengal coast where Bengal revolutionaries could more easily take charge of the same.

Narendranath left for Java a second time in August 1915. This time the main purpose of the mission assigned to him and his companion was to smuggle the German consignment of arms over the land route, the effort to land the same through the *Maverick* and other ships having failed for various reasons. Roy in his *Memoirs* says that he met Jatindra at Balasore just before leaving India for the second time (p. 35). He further says: "Already in the autumn of 1915, while passing through Manila, I had received the shocking news (of Jatindra's heroic death)." The famous battle of Balasore, in which Jatindra and his comrades went on fighting till their last bullet in a face-to-face encounter with a heavily armed superior police force, took place in September 1915.

Between August 1915 and July 1916 when he reached San Francisco, nearly a year, he spent "wandering through Malay, Indonesia, Indo-China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea and China" (RM, p. 22). This was not aimless wandering but a trek over sea and land, from one German consulate to another in the Far East in search of the authority which would deliver the goods wanted by the revolutionaries at home, viz arms and resources. In Japan—in Tokyo where Narendranath contacted both the German Consul-General and the Chinese revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen, a plausible plan seemed to have emerged. In Yunan and Szechuan the Chinese revolutionaries, followers of Sun Yat-sen, were preparing for a third revolution against Yuan Shih-kai. They would be prepared to sell a portion of arms and ammunition in their possession to Indian revolutionaries on the instruction of Sun Yat-sen if money for the same was forthcoming. The money was to be supplied by the German Consul-General in Peking and the smuggling of the arms was to be arranged across the north-eastern areas of Assam.

This was the plan made in Tokyo, but for its implementation Narendranath had to go to Peking to contact German Consul-General there. On the way to Peking, he made a deliberate detour to Tientsin in order to cover his tracks. He was arrested there by the police of the British consulate, which had jurisdiction over the "British concession" area of the city, on suspicion that he was an Indian revolutionary coming from Japan. He was however released as no further evidence against him could be got from the Japanese police. Thereafter he

contacted the German consulate in Tientsin and through its help contacted the leaders of Yunan and Szechuan revolutionaries.

Meanwhile, Roy says (RM, pp. 11-12), Yuan Shih-kai died and with him also went his plan for the restoration of monarchy, which made the third Chinese revolution pointless. This increased the possibility of securing arms and ammunition from Chinese revolutionaries. Agreement was signed with the Yunan leader in the presence of the German-Consul and the transport and delivery of the goods "across the frontier in the tribal area in the north-eastern corner of Assam" was fixed. When Narendranath came to Peking with the accredited representatives of the Yunan leader and the signed agreement, he found that the German ambassador in Peking "regretted his inability to spend such a large sum of money" to finance the arms purchase.

The German ambassador advised Narendranath to go to Berlin via USA to contact the highest authorities. The Germans had already secured for him a French Indian passport, issued to "a native of Pondicherry going to Paris to study theology"—in the name of Martin. But this time he was taken to Shanghai and smuggled as a stowaway on a German boat proceeding to Kobe. He got off the ship at Kobe, went to Tokyo to meet Rash Behari Bose and from there went straight to Yokohama where he boarded a big Japanese liner bound for San Francisco (RM, p. 13). Roy says, he landed at San Francisco "in the summer of 1916" (RM, p. 22). Considering that the death of Yuan Shih-kai took place on 6 June 1916 and allowing for the various movements after that, we conclude that he reached San Francisco in July 1916. From San Francisco Roy came to New York and met Lala Lajpat Rai in "autumn 1916" (RM, p. 26).

Roy seems to have remained in New York in continuous contact with Lala Lajpat Rai up to November 1916. He was with him when he held public meetings to popularise the cause of India's independence. At these meetings they came into contact with pacifists, socialists, anarchists and syndicalists, who supported India's cause but asked questions about independent India's social programme. Roy says, Lajpat Rai "purchased the works of Karl Marx, and other socialist classics" to understand socialism and be able to answer his socialist critics. Roy himself later "read the works of Karl Marx (in the New York Public Library) and discovered new meanings in them. It was not long before I accepted socialism, except its materialist philosophy" (RM, p. 29).

While in New York Roy was trying to get resources to finance his journey to Berlin but soon found that he could not get this "either from the Germans or from the (New York) representative of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin (RM, p. 43). He was thinking of crossing over to Mexico, where his acquaintances told him a social revolution was on. He even got a letter of introduction to General Alvarado from the president of Stanford University, Mr D. S. Jordan, who was a pacifist. General Alvarado was credited with carrying out radical social reforms in the state of Yucatan

Meanwhile Roy was arrested by the US police from one of Lajpat Rai's meetings. He was put up for preliminary inquiry and on the next day put before the court and charged with "the violation of the immigration law of USA". The jury endorsed the indictment but the court released him on bail and ordered him to present himself on the appointed day for trial (RM, p. 42). While on bail and under constant surveillance by the US plainclothes men, Roy managed to evade them and take the train to the border town of San Antonio from where overcoming difficulties "with sheer brass" he crossed over the Rio Grande and was in Mexico.

Roy says that one day he was arrested and taken for inquiry for the first time; that very night there was a round up of Indian revolutionaries. The newspaper headlines, he says, announced the next day "Hindu-German conspiracy unearthed! Enemy agent in custody" (RM, pp. 40-41). These arrests were for the famous San Francisco Trial which began on 20 November 1917 and ended on 24 April 1918.* He also says (RM, p. 59) that when he reached Mexico the Bolsheviks had just captured power in Russia. This means he crossed over into Mexico towards the end of November 1917.

Roy was in Mexico from November (end) 1917 up to early November 1919, when he left that country in a Spanish trans-Atlantic liner bound for Madrid on his way to Berlin. In his *Memoirs* he devotes some 176 pages (pp. 45-220) to his stay and experiences in Mexico. We have referred to this period of Roy's life in the general introduction and we propose to enumerate these developments in chronological order for the purpose of record.

Roy came to Mexico when that country was in the "throes of a revolution"—the character was anti-imperialist, anti-feudal. Mexico was asserting its independence from US imperialism. The Carranza regime, which was in power when he arrived, had in February 1917 proclaimed a new bourgeois-democratic constitution, considered most progressive in its time. Article 17 recognised the right of the peasant over the land he tilled and announced comprehensive land reforms. Simultaneously Mexico's mineral wealth was proclaimed to be the property of the people and constitution upheld the right of the state to expropriate it for the welfare of the nation as a whole. Article 123 provided for compre-

* The US government at the instance of the British government arrested 17 Indian revolutionaries along with 18 Germans of the consular service and charged them under Sec. 37 of the Federal Penal Code, with violating the neutrality of the United States government. The trial was held in San Francisco and lasted from 20 November 1917 to 24 April 1918. 15 Indian accused were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment ranging from one month to 22 months. Prominent among them were Taraknath Das, Bhai Bhagwan Singh, Bhai Santokh, Chandor Kanta Chakravorty (*The Ghadar—1915* by Khushwant Singh, New Delhi, p. 52, also its appendix xxxii).

hensive social measures including the right to strike, to trade union organisation, to 8-hour day and to social security. The power was to be exercised through a president and a congress elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The constitution was proclaimed but the masses, especially the peasantry, were in ferment fighting for its full implementation and the Carranza government was moving tardily forward under their pressure. Roy had a letter of introduction to one of the state governors with a radical posture, and that enabled him to get shelter and support from the Carranza government as an emigrant Indian revolutionary.

1918 was the last year of the war. The US having joined it in April 1917, the Germans could no longer conduct their clandestine anti-allied activities from that country. Their contact with Indians planning revolutionary actions in India could no longer function from that country (e.g. San Francisco Case). Mexico with its anti-US position offered them an alternative centre of operation. Based on Mexico they were trying to build an anti-US Latin American Union. The presence of Roy—the "Martin" of the gun-running operations from Batavia and China, with whom they were in contact—enabled them to pick up these threads also in Mexico. That is how the Germans contacted Roy in Mexico in 1918 and placed in his hands "50,000 pesos, all in gold coins" (RM, p. 91) to buy arms in China and transport them to Indian revolutionaries. Roy says he attempted to travel across Mexico to a port town and from there take a ship to China. But he missed the ship and then did not attempt further but returned to the capital. The money remained with him. Part of it he sent to Rash Behari Bose for transmission to Indian revolutionaries, but the bulk remained with him, enabling him to finance his stay and political activities in Mexico and later his departure to Europe.

In Mexico Roy came in contact with socialists. He learned Spanish and published two works in Spanish—a pamphlet entitled *The Way to Durable Peace* and later a book on India, *La India: su pasado, su presente y su porvenir* (see RM, p. 610).

Roy's contact with the leaders of the socialist movement in Mexico, which was also connected with an incipient trade union organisation, something like the IWW of USA, played an important role in his ideological evolution. This was natural because the socialist leading group as well as the organisation known as the "House of the Workers of the World" were supporters of the Carranza government, which had taken Roy under its protection. As the year 1918 advanced he was actively involved in the activities of the Socialist Party. When the party acquired a small press, he helped to run its party organ *La Lucha* which he says he transformed into a regular weekly of 8 pages. He was also editing the English section of a liberal bourgeois paper *El Heraldo*. In the middle of 1918 when the ideas of Bolshevik revolution in Russia were being discussed he proposed to the Socialist Party that it issue a manifesto calling upon the workers to convert the Socialist Party into

a mass workers' party. He says, he made the draft of the manifesto which was adopted and published in *La Lucha* (RM, pp. 131-32). Later the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party decided to hold its first conference in pursuance of the idea to convert itself into a mass party. The first conference met in December 1918 in which Roy "a non-Mexican, was unanimously elected the general secretary of the new party" (RM, p. 146). The conference decided to form the Latin American League in order "to fight for the defence of liberty and democracy against Yankee imperialism" (RM, p. 147).

As the general secretary of the Socialist Party of Mexico, which had close links with the government, Roy says, he met President Carranza several times and participated in high level consultations. During this time, in the course of some shifts, one Calles, a member of the Socialist Party, was appointed the Minister of Labour. Roy reports that he once accompanied Calles as Labour Minister to settle a strike of petroleum workers. Later in 1925 he became the President of Republic of Mexico and when Roy then met him in Paris, Calles told Roy that he has preserved his Socialist Party card bearing Roy's signature as general secretary.

In the early months of 1919, Roy was contacted in Mexico by Michael Borodin. This old Bolshevik, who was in exile in the days of the first world war in the USA and had returned home after the October Revolution, was sent out by Lenin in the beginning of 1919 on an important mission to the US. Due to some unforeseen difficulties he had to cross over into Mexico, where he landed practically resourceless. Borodin contacted Roy as the general secretary of the Socialist Party, through the local newspaper office. Soon after he shifted to Roy's place and the two lived and worked together for the best part of 1919 until one after another they left Mexico for Berlin and Moscow. Roy was not only able to offer a shelter and resources to Borodin but also put him in touch with the President, thus enabling him to contact his principals in Moscow and send his despatches through diplomatic channels.

Of his association with Borodin Roy writes -

"Ever since we met under the curious circumstances, until I left Russia in 1929, Borodin was one of my closest friends, although politically we often disagreed very strongly, as ultimately it happened in China... He initiated me in the intricacies of Hegelian dialectics as the key to Marxism. My lingering faith in the special genius of India faded as I learned from him the history of European culture" (RM, p. 195).

The idea of converting the Socialist Party into a mass workers' party remained unimplemented. It now took the shape of converting the Socialist Party into a communist party affiliated to the Communist International, which was founded in 1919. But before such a step was taken, Roy as the general secretary sounded the governmental circles and "ascertained from the Foreign Minister that a communist party would be tolerated provided that it eschewed provocative activities

which might embroil the diplomatic relations of his government with the powerful neighbour to the north" (RM, p. 209). The extraordinary conference of the Socialist Party, which became the foundation congress of the Communist Party of Mexico, took place in April 1919. It endorsed the manifesto of the First Congress of the CI and a "Message of the Secretariat of the CI" drafted on the spot by Borodin was read out at the conference. It elected delegates to attend the Second Congress of the CI scheduled to meet some time early 1920, and Roy was one of the two delegates elected. A detailed report of the conference was despatched by Borodin through special channels to Moscow (RM, p. 210-11).

"In autumn 1919, a message came through Scandinavia and Holland inviting the Communist Party of Mexico to send a delegation to the Second World Congress of the Communist International, and asking Borodin to return at the earliest opportunity." He was to await Roy's arrival in Berlin (RM, p. 216). As stated in the beginning Roy left Mexico "early in November 1919" (RM, p. 223) and Borodin seems to have left via USA a couple of months earlier. Summing up the balancesheet of his two-year stay in Mexico, Roy says: Reading of Marxian literature in New York began his "conversion to socialism. But there was no change in the fundamental outlook, in the philosophy of life." He calls Mexico the land of his "rebirth" where he became intellectually a free man, "though with a new faith... I no longer believed in political freedom without the content of economic liberation and social justice" (RM, p. 219).

Roy reached Berlin in December 1919 via Madrid. He went to the hotel indicated by Borodin, from where he was able to contact the then leaders of the German Communist Party viz Thalheimer and Brandler. He also mentions having met Wilhelm Pieck. Later he was contacted by Borodin, who told him that the arrangement to take him to Soviet Russia by train had failed and an alternative arrangement by ship would be made and he would have to wait. He must have remained in Berlin till the end of March or beginning of April. He describes being witness to the Kapp putsch which took place on 18 March 1920. He describes how the counter-revolutionary attempt was smashed by the German working class by a timely united action beginning with a general strike in which the social-democrats and communists acted jointly (RM, pp. 269-71).

In Berlin Roy says he contacted the members of the Indian Revolutionary Committee (Berlin Committee). Virendranath Chattopadhyaya was in Stockholm. He met Champakaraman Pillai and Dr Bhupendranath Dutta (RM, pp. 291-94). He also records his meetings with Abani Mukherji, who had come from Indonesia via Holland to Berlin, as we have described in the general introduction. Roy says, "he was the first Indian communist I met" (RM, p. 297).

Roy says, he received a message from Angelica Balabanova, who was then the first secretary of the Communist International, that he was

to proceed to Moscow immediately. This he says was "about the middle of May" (RM, p. 304). The date cannot be correct because he describes (RM, p. 350) at length how he attended and spoke at the May Day rally in Moscow in front of the Kremlin walls, where "the delegates to the Second World Congress, as the international brigade of the Red Army, was given the proud privilege of leading the demonstration into the square" (p. 351). This means he must have left Berlin at the end of March or in the beginning of April. He travelled from Stettin harbour, by the ship *The Soviet*, which took him to the gulf of Finland but he did not land in Helsingfors (Finland) but in Reval (Estonia) from where he travelled by train to Leningrad, and thence to Moscow.

Roy in his *Memoirs* does not mention that he wrote a manifesto addressed to the Indian revolutionaries during his 3-4 months stay in Berlin. But in the National Archives of India we find in the weekly report of the Director, Central Intelligence, Simla, 2 August 1920, ccpius extracts from "An Indian Communist Manifesto signed by Manabendra-nath Roy, Abani Mukherji and Santi Devi" (NAI-HPD, File 110 of August 1920). In the comment on the same the Director of Central Intelligence says that the manifesto was published in the *Glasgow Socialist* and was already mentioned in the weekly report of 19 July 1920. This was probably published in its June or July issues. The original has not been traced as the file of *Glasgow Socialist* for 1920 in the Marx Memorial Library, London, is incomplete. This was probably written by Roy while in Berlin some time in February or March 1920. Dr Bhupendranath Dutta writes the following in the course of his account of his meeting Roy in Berlin for the first time in the beginning of 1920:

'One day Roy asked the writer to come to him in the evening after dinner. When I went there, he read out to me a manifesto written by him. It was signed by M. N. Roy and Ali Hyder (Birendranath Dasgupta). He was going to Moscow after issuing this manifesto. Thereby he wanted to announce to the communists that he belonged a party of the exploited workers of India even before going to Moscow. I understand, he had promised the Bolsheviks that he would bring about a turn in the Indian revolutionary movement. There was a discussion with me on the same but I did not sign the manifesto. But that was the meaning of his consultation and discussion with me. He had come to say goodbye to me on the eve of his departure to Moscow via Finland. He came with his wife' (ARI, p. 252).

This clearly proves that the manifesto which we reproduce here is the one which M. N. Roy wrote while in Berlin, waiting to be taken to Moscow. The text we give here is the abridged version found in the National Archives. Under the heading "The Bolshevik Menace" the Intelligence report introducing the summary of what it calls "An Indian Communist Manifesto" says as follows:-

'In the issue of the weekly report of 19 July mention was made of a manifesto published in the *Glasgow Socialist*. A copy of this curious document has now been received. It is an appeal to the British proletariat

to join hands with the coming proletarian revolution in India against both the oppressive imperialism and the sentimental nationalism which would create bourgeois democracy of Indian exploiters. Omitting the verbiage the appeal runs thus:"

Even in this summary, the very sectarian and wrong approach towards national liberation movement, which we find in Roy's first draft of the *Supplementary Theses on National and Colonial Question* presented to the Colonial Commission of the Second Congress of the Communist International and which Lenin corrected, is present in its crudest form. The Central Intelligence Department's comment quoted above, saying that Roy is calling for a "proletarian revolution in India against both the oppressive imperialism and the sentimental nationalism which would create bourgeois democracy of Indian exploiters" is not a distortion of the portion taken in the document but the crudity is present in the same.

At one place in the manifesto it is stated: "The first step towards the social revolution must be to create a situation favourable for organising the masses for the final struggle. Such a situation can be created only by the overthrow or at least the weakening of the foreign imperialism which maintains itself by military power."

Here we see that the two distinct stages of the anti-imperialist democratic revolution are correctly recognised but its class implications for the first stage—namely that of the revolutionary struggle for national independence, i.e. for the stage of the anti-imperialist antifeudal revolution in which the proletariat has to play the role of the builder of united anti-imperialist front including the national bourgeoisie—are not at all understood. On the other hand, there is wrong contraposing of the forces of the movement fighting for national independence and the forces of the workers' and peasants' struggle—and a mixing of the two stages of the revolution, which could only lead to a sectarian approach. We find exactly the same errors in Roy's first draft of the *Supplementary Theses*, which Lenin corrected and which we discuss in great detail further on when we take up the documents of the Second Congress of the CI regarding the national and colonial question.

For instance, the manifesto says: "The idea of the proletarian revolution distinct from nationalism has come to India and is showing itself in unprecedented strikes. It is primitive and not clearly class-conscious so that it sometimes is the victim of nationalist ideas. But those in the van see the goal and the struggle and reject the idea of uniting the whole country under nationalism for the sole purpose of expelling the foreigner, because they realise that the native princes, landholders, factory owners, moneylenders, who would control the government, would not be less oppressive than the foreigner."

Further, in this manifesto, as in his first draft of the *Supplementary Theses*, the existence of two tendencies in the national liberation movement is mentioned; but here again the two tendencies and forces of the national liberation movement are contraposed in a manner that it

leads to a sectarian approach to the building of a broad national united front for the struggle for independence. The final version of the Supplementary Theses as corrected by Lenin and adopted by the Second Congress of the CI also speaks of the two tendencies in the national liberation movement, the one tending to compromising and the other consistently revolutionary, but the whole thing is put in the context of building the broad unity of the national liberation movement while fighting the compromising tendency.

The conclusion we draw from these considerations is that the abridged text of the manifesto that we find in the National Archives gives us a fair idea of the first immature effort of Roy to analyse the Indian situation. The fact that it contains the same errors that his later first draft of the Supplementary Theses contained is a proof that the manifesto was drafted by Roy.

2. "An Indian Communist Manifesto"

The time has come for the Indian revolutionists to make a statement of their principles in order to interest the European and American proletariat in the struggle of the Indian masses, which is rapidly becoming a fight for economic and social emancipation and the abolition of class rule. The appeal is made to the British proletariat because of their relation to revolutionary movements in countries dominated by British imperialism.

The nationalist movement in India has failed to appeal to the masses, because it strives for a bourgeois democracy and cannot say how the masses will be benefited by independent national existence. The emancipation of the working class lies in the social revolution and the foundation of a communist state. Therefore the growing spirit of rebellion in the masses must be organised on the basis of class struggle in close cooperation with the world proletarian movements.

But, because British domination deprives Indians of the elementary rights indispensable for the organisation of such a struggle, the revolutionary movement must emphasise in its programme the political liberation of the country. This does not make its final goal a bourgeois democracy under which the native privileged class would rule and exploit the native workers in place of British bureaucrats and capitalists. All that the world is allowed to know of the

Indian revolutionary movement is the agitation for political autonomy. This has naturally failed to enlist the sympathy of the working class in any country, which must always be indifferent to purely nationalist aspirations.

The idea of class-conscious rebellion against capitalistic exploitation has been gaining ground in India, immensely stimulated by the war. The quickened industrial life, the rise in the cost of living, the employment of Indian troops overseas and the echoes of the Russian revolution have fanned the discontent always existing in the masses. The nationalist revolutionary movement, recruited from educated youths of the middle classes, tried to turn the discontent to an armed uprising against foreign rule. Since the beginning of the present century, terrorism, local insurrections, conspiracies and attempts to revolt have become more and more frequent until at last practically the whole country came under martial law. These activities did not inspire the masses with lasting enthusiasm: the leaders failed to prescribe remedies for the social and economic evils from which the workers suffer. But dynamic economic forces, which are destined to cause a proletarian revolt in every country, have grown acute in India and hence the spirit of rebellion has grown more and more manifest among the people who were not moved by the nationalist doctrines preached by the revolutionaries. Today there are two tendencies in the Indian movement, distinct in principles and aims. The nationalists advocate an autonomous India and incite the masses to overthrow the foreign exploiter upon a vague democratic programme or no programme at all. The real revolutionary movement stands for the economic emancipation of the workers and rests on the growing strength of a class conscious industrial proletariat and landless peasantry. This latter movement is too big for the bourgeois leaders and can only be satisfied with the social revolution. This manifesto is issued for those who fill the ranks of the second movement. We want the world to know that nationalism is confined to the bourgeois, but the masses are awakening to the call of the social revolution.

The growth of class-consciousness in the Indian proletariat was unknown to the outer world until last year, when

The loss of the colonies might alarm orthodox trade union psychology with the threat of unemployment, but a class conscious revolutionary proletariat, aiming at the total destruction of capitalist ownership and the establishment of a communist state, cannot but welcome such a collapse of the present system since it would lead to the economic bankruptcy of capitalism—a condition necessary for its final overthrow.

To all possible misgivings of British comrades we declare that our aim is to prevent the establishment of a bourgeois nationalist government which would be another bulwark of capitalism. We wish to organise the growing rebelliousness of the Indian masses on the principles of the class struggle, so that when the revolution comes it will be social revolution. The idea of the proletarian revolution distinct from nationalism has come to India and is showing itself in unprecedented strikes. It is primitive and not clearly class-conscious so that it sometimes is the victim of nationalist ideas. But those in the van see the goal and the struggle and reject the idea of uniting the whole country under nationalism for the sole purpose of expelling the foreigner, because they realise that the native princes, landholders, factory owners, moneylenders, who would control the government, would not be less oppressive than the foreigner. "Land to the toiler" will be our most powerful slogan, because India is an agricultural country and the majority of the population belongs to the landless peasantry. Our programme also calls for the organisation of the Indian proletariat on the basis of the class struggle for the foundation of a communist state, based during the transition period on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We call upon the workers of all countries especially Great Britain to help us to realise our programme. The proletarian struggle in India as well as in other dependencies of Great Britain should be considered as vital factors in the international proletarian movement. Self-determination for India merely encourages the idea of bourgeois nationalism. Denounce the masked imperialists who claim it and who disgrace your name (of British workers). The fact that India is ruled by the mightiest imperialism known to history makes

any kind of revolutionary organisation among the working class almost impossible. The first step towards the social revolution must be to create a situation favourable for organising the masses for the final struggle. Such a situation can be created only by the overthrow or at least the weakening of the foreign imperialism which maintains itself by military power.

Cease to fall victims to the imperialist cry that the masses of the East are backward races and must go through the hell fires of capitalistic exploitation from which you are struggling to escape. We appeal to you to recognise the Indian revolutionary movement as a vital part of the world proletarian struggle against capitalism. Help us to raise the banner of the social revolution in India and to free ourselves from capitalistic imperialism that we may help you in the final struggle for the realisation of the universal communist state

MANABENDRA NATH ROY
ABANI MUKHERJI
SANTI DEVI

(NAI-HPD, August 1920, File No. 110, Weekly Report of the Director, Central Intelligence, Simla, 2 August 1920—"The Bolshevik Menace".)

Lenin on Roy's Supplementary Colonial Theses

It is well known that the Second Congress of the Communist International which met from 19 July to 7 August 1920 adopted the Theses on the National and Colonial Question presented by Lenin as well as the Supplementary Theses on the same question, the original draft of which was prepared by M. N. Roy. We are reproducing the official English text of both these documents as they were adopted by the Comintern.

M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* gives a description of his discussion with Lenin on the draft theses on the national and colonial question. How Roy expressed his disagreement with Lenin's draft and pointed out certain lacunae in the same, how Lenin then asked Roy to draft Supplementary Theses. According to Roy he "had only two typed copies made. One of them I personally delivered to Lenin... He read the document with the keenest interest and suggested some verbal alterations, which I readily accepted." The document was further discussed in the commission of which Roy gives his own version. Finally he says: "Lenin reported the discussion in the commission to a plenary session of the congress and recommended the adoption of both the theses." (RM, pp. 381-82)

Two noncommunist writers have given a fairly detailed account of this discussion and the differences which M. N. Roy had with Lenin at the Second Congress of the Comintern, how the Supplementary Theses of Roy arose and how finally after discussion in the commission and in plenary session of the congress Roy's theses were adopted as Supplementary Theses. One account is by the two American authors of *Communism In India*, Gene D. Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller

(pp. 26-33). Another is by E. H. Carr in his book *The Bolshevik Revolution* (Vol. III, pp. 251-59). The source of both is the same, viz verbatim report of Second Congress of the CI (Russian, 1934) and the *Memoirs* of M. N. Roy (Bombay, 1964).

A more authentic and true to the record account of the same is, however, given by a Soviet scholar, A. Reznikov, in his two detailed articles in *Kommunist*, the theoretical organ of the CPSU. They are: "Lenin on the National Liberation Movement" (No. 7, May 1967) and "Lenin's Struggle against Sectarian Distortions in the National Colonial Question" (No. 5, 1968). They are based not only on the verbatim report and documents of the Second Congress of the CI but on the study of the original sources, such as the initial text of Roy's theses on which Lenin worked and made his cuts and first amendments in English, as well as the minutes of the colonial commission preserved in the Central Party Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

This is not the place to give a detailed commentary on the original theses of Roy—what positive contribution they made to the discussion on the national and colonial question and the special features of the problems of the Indian freedom movement, what deviations they contained which were removed by Lenin and the commission, how these deviations persisted in the later political work of M. N. Roy, leading to his ultimately being removed from the leadership of the Colonial Bureau of the CI and still later on from the CI itself. Reznikov's articles mentioned above throw considerable light on some of these questions. They deserve careful study as pioneer contribution on the subject, which however needs further research and elucidation.

We have quoted from Roy's *Memoirs* above, where he says that his original draft was accepted by Lenin with "verbal alterations". Roy maintains that it was Lenin who amended his position under the force of his (Roy's) arguments and he says nothing of the wrong formulations contained in his original draft, which were in conflict with the main trend of Lenin's Theses and were therefore cut out by Lenin.

How does Roy present his differences with Lenin at the Second Congress of the CI in his *Memoirs*? He says:

"Lenin's Theses on the National and Colonial Question reiterated the principle of self-determination. I disagreed with his view that the nationalist bourgeoisie played a historically revolutionary role and therefore should be supported by the communists. The Polish communists of the Luxemburg school used to remark in joke that I was a true communist, while Lenin was a nationalist" (p. 355).

Apart from the arrogance displayed by Roy here, it is quite clear that he is rejecting the Leninist policy of national self-determination, the wise policy of supporting the national liberation struggle of the oppressed people as a whole as an anti-imperialist movement and a part of the world revolutionary process. Roy is taking pride in being included in

the Rosa Luxemburg school of leftist critics of Lenin's national self-determination policy.

Secondly, Roy is distorting Lenin's position as formulated by him even in his preliminary draft, by attributing to him a view which without reservation ascribed to the national bourgeoisie of the colonial and oppressed countries a historically revolutionary rôle.

Thirdly, Roy was contraposing the spontaneously developing workers' and peasants' economic struggles to the general national liberation movement, and proposed that the CI and the communists should support the former and not the latter as it was a bourgeois democratic movement. This dichotomy pervades the positions and formulations of Roy, as further quotations from *Memorés* will show, and it was the basis of a sectarian and self-isolation policy which was to prove disastrous later on.

Lenin's preliminary draft on the other hand, in its item 5 of thesis No 11, not only does not contain the distortion ascribed to him by Roy, but in its presentation contains in a seminal form the strategy of united anti-imperialist front, the tactic of unity and struggle and the policy of developing the initiating and leading role of the proletariat step by step.

All this will become clear when we give further quotations from Roy's account of what happened at the Second Congress and in its commission, and compare the same with Lenin's report to the plenary session about what happened in the commission.

M. N. Roy giving his version of the discussion at the Second Congress (RM, pp. 378-82) first summarises Lenin's position in his *Theses on the National and Colonial Question*. Roy states that from his analysis of imperialism "Lenin drew the conclusion that successful revolt of the colonial peoples was a condition for the overthrow of capitalism in Europe", and says:

"The strategy of world revolution should therefore include active support to the national liberation movement in the colonial countries. This view was set forth in Lenin's *Theses on the National and Colonial Question*. While presenting the theses to the Second World Congress, he declared that the Socialist Second International was not really international organisation, because it excluded the oppressed masses of Asia and Africa. By including in its programme the promotion of the national revolutionary movements in the non-European countries, the Third (Communist) International would be a true world organisation—the general staff of the world revolution."

Accepting that this position was theoretically sound, Roy raised the question that considering there were no communist parties in the colonial countries, which could act as instruments for revolution, "How could then the Communist International develop the national liberation movement there as part of the world proletarian revolution?"

Lenin's answer to this question is clearly stated in thesis No 11 of his preliminary draft and is also further elaborated in his report to the plenary session on the discussion in the colonial commission. But Roy

writing his *Memoirs* years afterwards ignores all these documents and gives his own distorted version of Lenin's position and makes the claim that he corrected Lenin, that Lenin accepted his (Roy's) original draft *Supplementary Theses* with only "some verbal alterations" and modified his own theses.

Lenin certainly took the position that the national liberation movement in the colonies must be supported, though its content was bourgeois democratic and it was led by the bourgeoisie. But in defining the role and the tasks of the rising communist elements in these countries and of the Communist International vis-a-vis the national liberation movement, Lenin laid down certain conditions. In his preliminary draft in thesis No 11, item 5, Lenin clearly stated:

"The Communist International should support bourgeois democratic movements in colonial and backward countries only on condition that in these countries the elements of future proletarian parties, which will be communist not only in name, shall be brought together and educated to understand their special tasks, viz to fight the bourgeois movements (trends) within their own nations. The Communist International must enter into temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in colonial and backward countries, but must not merge with it and must under all circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even in its most embryonic form."

Thus, even in these initial and earliest directives, the support to the national liberation movement is coupled with bringing into existence of an independent proletarian movement to guard the revolutionary perspective and future of the liberation movement. Roy's position on the other hand was a totally negative attitude towards the liberation movement led by the bourgeoisie and of an exclusive support to the rising workers' and peasants' movement,—attributing to it an advanced communist consciousness which it did not possess at that time and contraposing it to the national freedom movement. Roy in his *Memoirs* describes the position he took in his preliminary discussion with Lenin thus:

"I pointed out that the bourgeoisie even in the most advanced colonial countries, like India, as a class, was not economically and culturally differentiated from the feudal social order: therefore the nationalist movement was ideologically reactionary in the sense that their triumph would not necessarily mean a bourgeois democratic revolution. The role of Gandhi was the crucial point of difference. Lenin believed that, as the inspirer and leader of a mass movement he was a revolutionary. I maintained that as a religious and cultural revivalist, he was bound to be a reactionary socially, however revolutionary he might appear politically" (p. 379).

M. N. Roy is here equating the Indian national bourgeoisie with a socially reactionary class and saying the same thing about Gandhi and the contemporary national movement led by him. It is on record that "Lenin did not share this view either then (1920) or later (1921-23)

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(See "Lenin and Gandhi", article by P. Shastiko in *Soviet Review*, Vol VI No 72, September 1969). But Lenin's keen sense for the concrete, his respect for practical experience made him see a positive contribution in what Roy was saying, and that was the question of the compromising tendency of the national bourgeoisie in the liberation movement. How was the rising communist movement to fight this compromising tendency, while supporting the liberation movement and building up its independent proletarian base and movement? This needed detailed consideration and further clarification.

That is why Lenin asked Roy to draft a Supplementary Theses and took up the discussion of the same in the colonial commission. Roy himself pays a tribute to the "kind and tolerant" attitude of Lenin: "It was perhaps the most valuable experience of my life until then. I had the rare privilege of being treated as an equal by a great man, who proved his greatness by doing so" (RM, p. 380). This is good so far as it goes. But this is not all. It is the meticulously scientific and thoroughly revolutionary approach of Lenin that must be taken note of here. Lenin extracts the positive element of concrete experience in Roy's position, which is not sound all over, and seeks to integrate it with the general line of his preliminary draft through collective discussion in the commission and creates a sound revolutionary approach to carry the movement forward.

In his Memoirs, Roy gives a distorted and subjective account of the discussion in the commission and arrives at an exactly opposite conclusion. Roy says:

"But Lenin created a sensation by declaring that prolonged discussions with me had made him doubtful about his own theses; therefore, he proposed that both the drafts should be considered together as the greatest possible approximation to a theoretically sound and factually valid approach to the problem" (p. 381).

Now it is well known that Lenin reported on the discussion in the commission to a plenary session of the congress and recommended the adoption of both the drafts. But how were the drafts processed in the commission in order to be presented to the congress for acceptance? According to Roy, his original draft with "some verbal alterations" was added to Lenin's preliminary draft as a corrective. The reality, however, is that it was Roy's draft which was drastically amended and brought into consonance with the main general line of Lenin's preliminary draft, while the only change made in Lenin's preliminary draft was that in item 5 of thesis No 11 the word "bourgeois democratic" was replaced by "national revolutionary", making what was implied in it more explicit. The threefold tasks of the communists in the colonial and backward countries, viz (1) that they have to support the national liberation movement, (2) that they have to fight against the bourgeois democratic (compromising) tendency in the same, and (3) that they have to build and strengthen the independent proletarian movement and base, which

were already stated in item 5 of thesis No 11, quoted above, were made more explicit.

It is further necessary to examine the account Roy gives of the discussion in the commission, to compare with what actually happened there in terms of the minutes of the commission's proceedings as quoted by Reznikov in the second article referred to above, and also with Lenin's report of the commission's work to the plenary session of the congress. This will also bring out further important points which were clinched in the course of the discussion, and which became scientific guidelines for further developing the Leninist approach to the strategy and tactics of the national liberation movement in colonies and backward countries.

Roy states:

"Pending the clarification of theoretical issues in the light of future experience, the discussion in the commission brought out one practical point of difference between Lenin and myself. I concretised his general idea of supporting the colonial national liberation movement with the proposal that communist parties should be organised with the purpose of revolutionising the social character of the movement under the pressure of organised workers and peasants. That, in my opinion, was the only method of concretely helping the colonial peoples in their struggle for national liberation. I maintained that, afraid of revolution, the nationalist bourgeoisie would compromise with imperialism in return for some economic and political concessions to their class. The working class should be prepared to take over at that crisis the leadership of the struggle for national liberation and transform it into a revolutionary mass movement. I again impressed Lenin by quoting Plekhanov who had predicted in the closing years of the nineteenth century that the democratic movement in Russia should grow into a proletarian revolution or it would not succeed" (RM, p. 382).

Here we see once again that Roy is contraposing the movement of organised workers and peasants to the national liberation movement, is taking a negative attitude to the latter, is calling for an exclusive support to the former and stating that Lenin and the International accepted the position. In the minutes of the colonial commission's proceedings quoted by Reznikov, we have a summary of what Roy actually said there, and how he was opposed by Lenin and some other delegates. Under the subheading "Report of Comrade Roy (India)", Reznikov quotes as follows:

"Since the 1880s, the nationalist movement in India has begun to assume more or less definite forms and has found its expression in the National Congress.

"In the course of its development this movement has embraced broad circles of the student, youth and the middle classes, but the call of nationalists to fight for India's independence has not struck a response among the masses.

"The masses of India are not infected by the national spirit. They

are interested solely in questions of a socio-economic nature. The condition of India's population is extremely grave.

"Ever since British capitalism entrenched itself in India, 80 per cent of the country's population who draw their subsistence from agriculture have lost their property and turned into agricultural labourers. These millions of people are beggars. Though they till the soil they starve because everything produced by their labour is shipped abroad. These tens of millions of people are absolutely not interested in bourgeois nationalist slogans; only one slogan can interest them—land to the tiller of the soil

"As compared with the rural proletariat the industrial proletariat of India is small. Altogether there are up to 5 million workers in India. The trade union movement is swiftly spreading among these workers. The strike movement has strongly developed among the working class of India in recent years. The first important strike occurred in 1906. It involved railwaymen and assumed the nature of a real uprising.

"India has elements for the creation of a strong communist party. But the revolutionary movement in India, in as much as the broad masses are concerned, has nothing in common with the national liberation movement."

"Proceeding from this analysis, Comrade Roy arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to delete from the 11th thesis (of Lenin's preliminary draft) on the national question the paragraph about the need for all the communist parties to help bourgeois democratic liberation movement in eastern countries. The Communist International should help solely to create and develop the communist movement in India, and the Communist Party of India must concern itself only with organising the broad masses to fight for their class interests.

"Comrade Roy defended the idea that the fate of the revolutionary movement in Europe entirely depended on the course of the revolution in the East. Without triumph of the revolution in the eastern countries, the communist movement in the West could be reduced to naught... World capitalism drew its main resources and its income in the colonies, chiefly in Asia. European capitalists were able in extreme cases to give the workers all the surplus value and thereby win them over to their side, stifling their revolutionary aspirations. As for the capitalists themselves, they would continue to exploit Asia with the help of the proletariat. Such an outcome would be very advantageous for the capitalists. In view of this it was necessary to shift energy to the development and advancement of the revolutionary movement in the East and to accept as the main thesis the proposition that the fate of world communism depended on the triumph of communism in the East.

"Comrade Quelch of the British Communist Party replied to Comrade Roy. Comrade Quelch proved that communists must help any movement against imperialism. So far the national liberation movement in India perhaps did not enjoy the sympathies of the broad masses, but this did not mean that it would not enjoy it in the immediate future..."

"Comrade Lenin also challenged Roy's viewpoint. 'In Russia we supported the liberal liberation movement during the attack on tsarism. Communists of India must support the bourgeois democratic movement without merging with it. Comrade Roy went too far, alleging that the fate of the West depended solely on the degree of development and strength of the revolutionary movement in the eastern countries. Though India had 5 million proletarians and 37 million landless peasants, Indian communists so far had not succeeded in founding a communist party in the country and for this reason alone the views of Comrade Roy were largely unsubstantiated.'"

This lengthy quotation from the minutes of the commission on the national and colonial question of the Second Congress of the CI puts the record straight. M. N. Roy made a positive contribution in as much as he pointed out that there was a compromising bourgeois democratic trend in the national liberation movement as well as a potentially revolutionary trend of workers' and peasants' movement and posed the question of the attitude and relation of the CI and the communists towards both. Roy's own answer to this question, as given in his original draft, contained a number of sectarian formulations which were contrary to the general line of Lenin's preliminary draft. Roy in fact wanted the deletion of item 5 from thesis No 11 of Lenin's draft, stressing the need to support the bourgeois democratic liberation movement. Lenin, while rejecting this sectarian negative approach to the national liberation movement and its absolute contraposition to the spontaneously rising workers' and peasants' movement, agreed to clarify the distinction between the reformist and revolutionary trend in the movement and clearly defined the communist attitude towards both. This was achieved, not only by making amendments, i.e. cuts and additions in Roy's original draft, but, as stated previously, by replacing the term "bourgeois democratic" by the term "national revolutionary" in item 5 of thesis No 11 in Lenin's preliminary draft. Here Lenin's own explanation of this change, given in his report about the commission's work to the plenary session, should be quoted in detail:

"...I should like especially to emphasise the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. This is a question that has given rise to certain differences. We have discussed whether it would be right or wrong, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the communist parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we have arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than of the 'bourgeois-democratic' movement. It is beyond doubt that any national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, since the overwhelming mass of the population in the backward countries consist of peasants who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties in these backward countries, if indeed they can emerge in them, can pursue communist tactics and a com-

munist policy, without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support. However, the objections have been raised that, if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinctions between the reformist and the revolutionary movements. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in the backward and colonial countries, since the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything in its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations too. There has been a certain rapprochement between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and that of the colonies, so that very often—perhaps even in most cases—the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries, while it does support the national movement, is in full accord with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i.e. joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably proved in the commission, and we decided that the only correct attitude was to take this distinction into account and, in nearly all cases, substitute the term 'national-revolutionary' for the term 'bourgeois-democratic'. The significance of this change is that we, as communists, should and will support bourgeois-liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organising in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited. If these conditions do not exist, the communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, to whom the heroes of the Second International also belong. Reformist parties already exist in the colonial countries, and in some cases their spokesmen call themselves social-democrats and socialists. The distinction I have referred to has been made in all the theses with the result I think, that our view is now formulated much more precisely" (CW 31, pp 241-42).

In support of his sectarian position, that the CI and the communists should not support the national liberation movement led by the bourgeoisie but should exclusively concentrate their efforts to organise communist parties and to develop revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement, Roy argued that support to bourgeois-led liberation movement would lead to the replacement of foreign capitalist rule by that of Indian capitalists. While in the latter case it would lead to the emergence of Soviet power and prevent growth of native capitalism.

This is contained in last two theses, i.e. Nos 10 and 11 of Roy's original draft. These two paras, besides bringing out in the sharpest form the sectarian approach pervading Roy's original draft, also make a contribution, though in a negative way. They pose the questions of the future perspective of the national revolutions in the colonial and backward countries: How will the people of these countries advance towards socialism? Must they necessarily go through a period of capitalist development after winning independence?

Roy gives an oversimplified answer, which instead of showing the communist parties of these countries the concrete way forward could

only lead to their sectarian self-isolation. Lenin cut these two paras out and replaced them by a few pregnant sentences in which he outlines in germ form the practical steps by which the working people of these countries could take the path of noncapitalist development to socialism, in alliance with the forces of victorious socialism.

These two theses read as follows:

"10. The bourgeois national democrats in the colonies strive for the establishment of a free national state, whereas the masses of workers and poor peasants are revolting, even though in many cases unconsciously, against the system which permits such brutal exploitation. Consequently, in the colonies we have two contradictory forces; they cannot develop together. To support the colonial bourgeois democratic movements would amount to helping the growth of the national spirit which will surely obstruct the awakening of class consciousness in the masses; whereas to encourage the support to the revolutionary mass action through the medium of a communist party of the proletarians will bring the real revolutionary forces to action which will not only overthrow the foreign imperialism, but lead progressively to the development of Soviet power, thus preventing the rise of a native capitalism in place of the vanquished foreign capitalism, to further oppress and exploit the people

"11. To initiate at as early a stage as possible, the class struggle in the colonies, means to awaken the people to the danger of a transplanted European capitalism which, overthrown in Europe, may seek refuge in Asia, and to defeat such an eventuality before its beginning" (see photostat on pp 176-77, also pp. 186 and 188)

Lenin and the commission replaced these theses by the following

"On the contrary, the proletarian parties must carry on vigorous and systematic propaganda of the Soviet idea and organise the peasants' and workers' Soviets as soon as possible. These Soviets will work in cooperation with the Soviet republics in the advanced capitalist countries for the ultimate overthrow of the capitalist order throughout the world"

The idea which is implied here is made explicit and further explained by Lenin in his report on the discussion in the commission to the plenary session. The relevant passage runs as follows:

"There was quite a lively debate on this question in the commission, not only in connection with the theses I signed, but still more in connection with Comrade Roy's theses, which he will defend here, and certain amendments to which were unanimously adopted

"The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in

that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the precapitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stage of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

"The necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience. It has, however, been definitely established, that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a precapitalist social system, and that the communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world" (CW 31, p. 244).

From the presentation of the facts about the Supplementary Theses on the National Colonial Question, put forward by M. N. Roy at the instance of Lenin before the colonial commission of the Second Congress of the CI and later before the plenary session of the same, in an amended form, we can now draw the following conclusions:

(1) Roy's positive contribution at the Second Congress was that he drew attention to the compromising tendency in the bourgeois democratic liberation movement in the colonies and backward countries and in that connection raised the question as to how the CI and the communists were to develop the revolutionary movement in those colonies. He also raised the question as to how the people of these countries were to avoid the capitalist stage in their march towards socialism after independence. Roy's own answer to both these questions as given in his original draft were based on a dogmatic and sectarian outlook.

(2) The claim that Roy makes in his *Memoirs* that his original draft was accepted by Lenin with only "verbal alterations" and adopted by the congress together with Lenin's theses, because his Supplementary Theses were a corrective to those of Lenin, is totally unjustified and false. It is clear from a comparison of the original draft of Roy's theses with its amended version as finally adopted, as well as from the record of the proceedings of the plenary session and of the colonial commission of the congress, that the amendments made were not verbal but fundamental and involved the elimination of all dogmatic and sectarian formulations which contradicted the general line of Lenin's theses. The only amendment introduced in Lenin's preliminary draft clarified the general line contained therein which was further concretised by the addition of the amended Supplementary Theses.

(3) The contraposition of the national liberation movement to the rising revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement in the colonies

and backward countries, the proposition that the CI and the communist parties should not support the national liberation movement but should exclusively concentrate on the building of the communist parties and developing the workers' and peasants' movement, the proposition that "without breaking up of the colonial empire in the East the overthrow of capitalism in Europe is not possible"—these are the main sectarian positions in Roy's original draft. Lenin's theses reject this dichotomy between the national and class movements of the people of the colonies which does not exist in actual life and shows very clearly, especially after the term "bourgeois democratic" is replaced by "national revolutionary", how the support to the national liberation movement has to be combined with the fight against the bourgeois democratic compromising tendency and the fight for building an independent class movement and of the communist parties. Lenin's theses also stressed the necessity for the joint action of the workers of Europe fighting against capitalism and of the peoples of the colonies fighting for their national freedom. Lenin's theses, therefore, already contained the basic guidelines for the general line of building the united anti-imperialist front on the national and world planes as strategy and tactics of fighting the compromising bourgeois democratic tendency on the one hand and of developing the independent strength and initiative of the working class and of the workers' and peasants' movement on the other.

(4) Roy no doubt posed the question of the possibility for the peoples of the colonies and backward countries who have won their national freedom to pass over to socialism without going through the stage of capitalism. But the path of making this possibility a reality which Roy proposes in his original draft is an oversimplification—based on the same dichotomy of national and class movements, viz sole concentration on the building of the communist party and workers' and peasants' economic movement to the exclusion of any support to the national liberation movement. Lenin cuts out these sectarian propositions from the Supplementary Theses and introduces in them the fruitful idea that the young communist parties must carry on vigorous and systematic propaganda of the Soviet idea and organise peasants' and workers' Soviets. Roy in his Supplementary Theses had put the proposition that "the peoples in the colonies are bound to go through the stage of bourgeois democracy is wrong" and connected it with the proposition that "if from the outset the leadership is in the hands of the communist vanguard, the revolutionary masses will not be led astray but may go ahead through successive periods of development of revolutionary experience".

Lenin in amending Roy's draft cuts out the proposition that passing through the stage of bourgeois democracy is not obligatory to colonial peoples from that place and brings its positive content at the end, after the proposition for the necessity of building peasants' Soviets etc. So the chain of ideas in Lenin's presentation is then as follows:

that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the precapitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stage of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

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Lenin in amending Roy's draft cuts out the proposition that passing through the stage of bourgeois democracy is not obligatory to colonial peoples from that place and brings its positive content at the end, after the proposition for the necessity of building peasants' Soviets etc. So the chain of ideas in Lenin's presentation is then as follows:

If the communist vanguard has from the outset the leadership of the revolutionary masses, then it must concentrate on developing the agrarian revolution, not on pure communist lines but with many petty bourgeois reform clauses. This does not mean surrendering the leadership to bourgeois democrats. They can retain leadership if they make vigorous and systematic propaganda for the Soviet idea and organise workers' and peasants' Soviets. If these emerge victorious in the national freedom struggle then the possibility of bypassing capitalist stage can be realised with the cooperation of Soviet republics in advanced capitalist countries.

What is the significance of the Soviet idea which Lenin puts forward as a key link which has to be grasped if the communist vanguard has to succeed in consolidating its leadership in the national revolution and open the path for noncapitalist development? What are Soviets? Soviets are nonparty mass organisations of the working people, of workers, peasants and other nonproletarian masses, which arise as organs of struggle and later if successful become organs of power. Soviets are an alliance of revolutionary classes—a united front mass organisation of struggle which develops into organs of power.

Lenin is here probing to 'work out the guidelines for the communist vanguard to develop national revolution and to achieve proletarian hegemony in the same. Lenin rejects the sectarian idea that this hegemony can emerge readymade out of spontaneous economic struggles of the masses, or can be bolstered up from outside, as against the national liberation movement. The communist vanguard can do so if, firstly, it concentrates on the carrying through the agrarian revolution not on pure communist lines but with many petty bourgeois reform clauses. Secondly, if it concentrates on the organisation of peasants' Soviets. Lenin suggests that the communist vanguard should "strive to adapt them (the Soviet idea) to precapitalist conditions." He adds, "It has... been definitely established that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a pre-capitalist social system, and that the communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world."

What did Lenin mean by this directive? How was it implemented in the course of several decades of rich experience of the national liberation struggle in colonies and backward countries? How did this "adaptation" of the Soviet idea express itself in the subsequent work of the CI and the communist parties, in developing the theory and practice of the national revolution in these countries?

Answers to these questions can be given if we take into account the essence of the Soviet idea as we have defined above, if we bear in mind that the communist vanguard, seeking this adaptation of the Soviet idea, has first and foremost to support the national liberation struggle, while fighting the bourgeois democratic compromising tendency on the one hand and preserving and strengthening the independence

of the communist party and of the class organisations of the workers and peasants on the other.

The adaptation of the Soviet idea to the problem of developing national liberation movement in the colonies and backward countries, therefore, cannot mean contraposing the rising peasants' and workers' movement to the national liberation movement—which was the running thread in the original draft of Roy's theses. That adaptation must mean integrating the two in such a way that the national liberation movement is developed in a revolutionary direction, the compromising tendency fought, and the independence of the workers' and peasants' class movement and of the communist party maintained and developed.

This adaptation therefore took the form of building the united national anti-imperialist front, in which the class organisations of workers and peasants and other nonproletarian masses form integral part, playing the role of unleashing the agrarian revolution and raising the national struggle to a revolutionary level—thus progressively isolating the compromising bourgeois tendency. If the communist vanguard plays its role correctly in building the united national anti-imperialist front, if it concentrates on the agrarian antifeudal revolution and on raising to a higher revolutionary level the national liberation movement, fighting the bourgeois compromising tendency and preserving and developing the independence of militant class and mass organisations of peasants, agricultural labourers and workers, then that front will develop as a wellknit organ of struggle and will become later an organ of power.

Lenin's preliminary draft theses already contained the essential guidelines for developing a harmoniously integrated theory, strategy and tactics of national democratic revolution in colonies and backward countries. The discussion in the colonial commission, on the points raised in Roy's Supplementary Theses and the correction of the sectarian approach contained in them gave Lenin the opportunity to further clarify and concretise these guidelines. In the process these guidelines were enriched by three new valuable ideas: (1) clear distinction between reformist and revolutionary tendencies in the national liberation movement and fighting the former; (2) adapting the Soviet idea to the specific conditions of the national democratic revolution in these countries; and (3) indicating how this revolution can pass over to socialist revolution avoiding the capitalist stage.

The fourth, sixth and seventh congresses of the Communist International developed these guidelines further as practical experience of developing revolutionary movement in a number of countries accumulated. The Fourth Congress (1922), which was the last in which Lenin was able to creatively participate, developed the idea of the united anti-imperialist front. The Sixth Congress (1928), which had before it a vast and rich experience of national revolutionary struggles in these countries to generalise from, attempted to formulate an integrated and harmonious theory, strategy and tactics of the national democratic revolution in its Theses on Revolutionary Movement in Colonies and

Semicolonies, which, however, contained serious sectarian errors. The Seventh Congress (1935) made an important tactical correction in the above

In the years immediately preceding the Sixth World Congress, and in the years immediately thereafter, certain serious sectarian and reformist errors and shortcomings entered in the work of the communist parties in these countries (e.g. India, China and Indonesia), which in spite of the massive achievements of these parties in developing a powerful revolutionary workers' and peasants' movement prevented them from playing an effective role in the national freedom movement of these countries. The sectarian formulations and shortcomings of the theses of the Sixth Congress itself were further magnified in the work of the Colonial Bureau of the ECCI and in the work of the national parties.

Pseudoresearch workers of the bourgeoisie, writing tendentious histories of the communist parties, actuated by anticommunism, have "explained" these errors and shortcomings by the theory that Lenin himself compromised with the sectarian approach in Roy's theses. Such a "theory" is not justified by a dispassionate study of the work of the colonial commission, nor of the work of the parties themselves. On the other hand, such a dispassionate and scientific study would reveal that these errors and shortcomings arose because Lenin's flexible guidelines were sought to be applied mechanically and dogmatically and not creatively developed with the scientific and revolutionary approach with which they were formulated.

For instance, adaptation of the Soviet idea to the concrete revolutionary conditions of these countries was replaced for some time by mechanically copying the Soviet experience. Similarly the Leninist guidance of combining the support to the national liberation movement with fight against bourgeois compromising tendency and maintaining the independence of proletarian parties and of peasants' and workers' movement was sometimes distorted either in the sectarian or reformist direction. It either became contraposing proletarian hegemony to support to the national liberation struggle or merging with the latter and neglecting to develop proletarian independence and initiative to unleash the agrarian and antifeudal revolution.

This note which was meant as a background and introduction to the catalogue of cuts and amendments introduced by Lenin and the colonial commission in the original draft Supplementary Theses of M. N. Roy has digressed far into other matters. This was necessary to put the record straight and to refute the distortions that have been made on the two theses by Roy himself and by many recent bourgeois research scholars.

This was necessary also because, Roy himself did not assimilate the corrections made by Lenin but continued to maintain his own position, the position later described as "decadentism theory", that British imperialism, afraid of the threat of revolution in the home country, would

make far-reaching concessions to the Indian national bourgeoisie, in the sphere of industrialisation and autonomy of Indian administration, and that the latter afraid of the revolutionary movement of peasants and workers in India would fail for the same, thus splitting away from the national liberation front, followed directly from the formulation in his original draft. This idea runs as a red thread through his *India in Transition* (published: beginning of 1922) and is clearly stated in his introduction to the German edition of that book. Though his practical work and writings in connection with India, up to 1927 when he was in the Colonial Bureau of the ECCI, were generally on right rails and were appreciated by the then leadership of the CI (Zinoviev), he was sometimes criticised in the CI during this period for persisting in his positions rejected at the Second Congress.* It is not possible to appraise his work in China (beginning of 1927) where he is supposed to have gone on behalf of the ECCI, only from his own account in his *Revolution and Counter-revolution in China*. No critical checkup of this work is available either from the side of the official party historians of the Chinese CP or from those of the CPSU or the CI.

Roy was not present at the Sixth World Congress in the autumn of 1928, though at that time he was still a member of the ECCI. He sent a long paper to that congress in which he explained his stand—described by others as the "decolonisation theory", but it did not take any official note of Roy's paper. After the Sixth Congress Roy ceased to be a member of the ECCI or any of its executive bodies.

In the beginning of 1929 Roy began to associate closely with the oppositional group of Brandier and Thalheimer, who were then expelled from the German CP, and he wrote in their journals. In the tenth plenum of the ECCI (20 August 1929), Comrade Kuusinen made it public in his report that "M N Roy is no longer our comrade considering that he contributes to the press of Brandierite renegades"***

We are printing the original draft and amended version of Roy's theses side by side (in pages facing each other) for easy reference. Lenin's cuts and amendments are given in black type and the consequential and editorial changes made by the colonial commission in italics.

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M. N. Roy in Moscow during the Second CI Congress

the home country so long as it continues in the position to its huge super-profit in the colonies.

4. Without the breaking up of the colonial empire, the overthrow of the capitalist system in Europe does not appear possible. Consequently, the Communist International must widen the sphere of its activities. It must establish relations with those revolutionary forces that are working for the overthrow of imperialism in the countries subjected politically and economically.

5. The relation of the Communist International with the revolutionary movement in the subject countries is not tantamount to the former's abdication, the doctrine of ultra-nationalism. The Communist International is the concentrated will of the world revolutionary proletariat. Its mission is to organize the working class of the whole world for the overthrow of the capitalist order and the establishment of Communism. The Third International is a fighting body which has outgrown the realm of pure doctrinaireism.

Dominated as it was by a group of politicians, permeated with bourgeois culture, the Second International failed to appreciate the importance of the revolutionary movement in the subject countries. It did not exist outside of Europe.

6. The Second International was not coordinating the revolutionary movements in Europe with those in the non-European countries. Instead of giving moral and material help to the revolutionary movements in the colonies, the members of the Second International themselves became imperialists.

7. Foreign imperialism imposed on the eastern peoples prevented them from developing socially and economically side by side with their fellows in Europe and America. Owing to the imperialistic policy of preventing industrial development of the colonies, a proletariat class in the strict sense of the term could not come into existence until recently. The indigenous craft industries were destroyed to make room for the products of the centralized industries in the imperialistic countries; consequently a big majority of the population was driven to the land to produce food grains and raw materials for the export to foreign lands. On the other hand, there followed a rapid

The real strength of the liberation movement in the colonies is no longer confined to the narrow circle of bourgeois democratic allies. In most of the colonies, especially where already exist organized socialist or communist parties, in close relation to the mass movement. The relation of the Communist International with the revolutionary movement in the colonies should be through the medium of these parties or groups, because they are the vanguard of the working class in their respective countries. They may not be very big today, but they reflect the direction of the masses and the masses will follow them. Parties of the different

base of the colonies and through them, give all the moral and material support to the revolutionary movements in general.

The opposition that, owing to the role and the actual development of the colonies in the capitalist world, there is the stage of bourgeois democracy, is wrong. The conditions in the colonies are such that the revolution is not going to be a bourgeois revolution in its first stages. But it is true that the land of the revolution is in the hands of a small bourgeois class, the revolutionary class would not be led away but would be brought about through the successive periods of development of revolutionary experience. Indeed, it would be the same in any of the Oriental countries to solve the agrarian problem along the communist principle. In its first stages, the revolution in the colonies must be carried with a program in which will be included many petty-bourgeois reforms, such as, for instance, division of land etc. But from this it does not necessarily follow that the lead of the revolution will have to be transferred to the bourgeois democrats.

10. The bourgeois national committees in the colonies strive for the establishment of a free nation state, to increase the masses of workers and peasants are revolting even though in many cases anonymously, against the

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system which profits from brutal exploitation. Consequently, in the colonies, we have two contradictory forces; they cannot develop together. To support the colonial bourgeois democratic movements would amount to helping the growth of the national spirit which will surely obstruct the awakening of class-consciousness in the masses; whereas, to encourage and support the revolutionary mass action through the medium of a communist party of the proletariat will bring the real revolutionary forces to action which will not only overthrow the foreign capitalism, but lead progressively to the development of Soviet power, thus preventing the rise of a native capitalism in place of the vanquished foreign capitalism, to further oppress and exploit the people.

11. To initiate at as early a stage as possible, the class struggle in the colonies, means to warn the people to the danger of a transplanted European capitalism which, overthrown in Europe, may seek refuge in Asia, and to prevent such an eventuality before its beginning.

M. N. Roy
India

3. Roy's Original Draft and Adopted

ORIGINAL DRAFT

1. To determine the relation of the Communist International to the revolutionary movements in the countries dominated by capitalistic imperialism is one of the most important questions before the Second Congress of the Third International. The history of the world revolution has come to a period when a proper understanding of this relation is indispensable; the great European war and its results have shown clearly that the masses of the non-European subjected countries are inseparably connected with the proletarian movement in Europe, as a consequence of the *centralised* world capitalism.

2. *The fountainhead from which European capitalism draws its main strength is no longer to be found in the industrial countries of Europe, but in the colonial possessions and dependencies.* Without the control of the extensive markets and vast fields of exploitation in the colonies, the capitalist powers of Europe cannot maintain their existence even for a short time. England, the stronghold of

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Text of Supplementary Theses

AMENDED THESES

1. To determine *more especially* the relation of CI to the revolutionary movements in the countries dominated by capitalistic imperialism, *for instance China and India*, is one of the most important questions before the Second Congress of the Third International. The history of the world revolution has come to a period when a proper understanding of this relation is indispensable. The great European war and its result have shown clearly that the masses of non-European subjected countries are inseparably connected with the proletarian movement in Europe, as a consequence of the *centralisation of world capitalism for instance the sending of colonial troops and huge armies of workers to the battlefield during the war, etc.*

2. One of the main sources from which European capitalism draws its chief strength is to be found in the colonial possessions and dependencies. Without the control of the extensive markets and vast fields of exploitation in the colonies, the capitalist powers of Europe cannot maintain their existence even for a short time. England, the stronghold of imperialism, has been suffering from overproduction

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imperialism, has been suffering from overproduction since more than a century ago. But for the extensive colonial possessions acquired for *selling* her surplus products and as a source of raw materials for her ever growing industries, the capitalist structure of England would have crushed under its own weight long ago. By enslaving the hundreds of millions of inhabitants of Asia and Africa, English imperialism *succeeded* so far in keeping the British proletariat under the domination of the bourgeoisie.

3. Superprofit gained in the colonies is the mainstay of modern capitalism and so long as it is not deprived of this source of superprofit, it will not be easy for the European working class to overthrow the capitalist order. Thanks to the possibility of *intensive* and extensive exploitation of human labour and natural resources in the colonies, the capitalist nations of Europe are trying, not without success, to recuperate their present bankruptcy. By exploiting the masses in the colonies, European imperialism will be in a position to give concession after concession to the *proletariat* at home. It will not hesitate to go to the extent of sacrificing the entire surplus value in the home country so long as it continues in the position to gain its huge superprofits in the colonies.

4. *Without the breaking up of the colonial empire, the overthrow of the capitalist system in Europe does not appear possible.* Consequently, the Communist International must widen the sphere of its activities. It must establish relations with those revolutionary forces that are working for the overthrow of imperialism in the countries subjected politically and economically.

5. Such relation of the Communist International with

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since more than a century ago. But for the extensive colonial possessions acquired for *the sale of* her surplus products and as a source of raw materials for her ever growing industries, the capitalistic structure of England would have been crushed under its own weight long ago. By enslaving the hundreds of millions of inhabitants of Asia and Africa, English imperialism *succeeds* so far in keeping the British proletariat under the domination of the bourgeoisie.

3. Superprofit gained in the colonies is the mainstay of the modern capitalism—and so long as the latter is not deprived of this source of superprofit, it will not be easy for the European working class to overthrow the capitalist order. Thanks to the possibility of the extensive exploitation of human labour and natural resources in the colonies, the capitalist nations of Europe are trying, not without success, to recuperate their present bankruptcy. By exploiting the masses in the colonies, European imperialism will be in a position to give concession after concession to the *labour aristocracy* at home. *Whilst on the one hand, European imperialism seeks to lower the standard of living of the home proletariat by bringing into competition the productions of the lower paid workers in subject countries, on the other hand, it will not hesitate to go to the extent of sacrificing the entire surplus value in the home country so long as it continues to gain its huge superprofits in the colonies.*

4. *The breaking up of the colonial empire, together with the proletarian revolution in the home country, will overthrow the capitalist system in Europe.* Consequently, the Communist International must widen the sphere of its activities. It must establish relations with those revolutionary forces that are working for the overthrow of imperialism in the countries subjected politically and economically. *These two forces must be coordinated if the final success of the world revolution is to be guaranteed.*

5. The CI is the concentrated will of the world revolu-

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the revolutionary movement in the subject countries is not tantamount to the former's upholding the doctrine of nationalism. The Communist International is the concentrated will of the world revolutionary proletariat. Its mission is to organise the working class of the whole world for the overthrow of the capitalist order and the establishment of communism. The Third International is a fighting body *which has outgrown the realm of pure doctrinairism.*

Dominated as it was by a group of politicians, permeated with bourgeois culture, the Second International failed to appreciate the importance of the colonial question. For them the world did not exist outside of Europe.

They could not see the necessity of coordinating the revolutionary movement in Europe with those in the non-European countries. Instead of giving moral and material help to the revolutionary movements in the colonies, the members of the Second International themselves became imperialists.

6. Foreign imperialism imposed on the eastern peoples prevented them from developing socially and economically side by side with their fellows in Europe and America. Owing to the imperialistic policy of preventing industrial development of the colonies, a proletarian class in the strict sense of the term could not come into existence until recently. The indigenous craft industries were destroyed to make room for the products of the centralised industries in the imperialistic countries; consequently a big majority of the population was driven to the land to produce foodgrains and raw materials for export to foreign lands. On the other hand, there followed a rapid concentration of land, *the proprietary right of which was vested in the state* thus creating a huge landless peasantry. The great bulk of the population was kept in a state of illiteracy. As a result of *this* policy, the spirit of revolt latent in every subject people found its expression only through the small, educated middle class.

The foreign domination has obstructed the free development of the social forces—therefore its overthrow is the first step towards *the* revolution in the colonies. So, to help

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tionary proletariat. Its mission is to organise the working class of the whole world for the overthrow of the capitalistic order and the establishment of communism. The Third International is a fighting body *which must assume the task of combining the revolutionary forces of all the countries of the world*. Dominated as it was by a group of politicians, permeated with bourgeois culture, the Second International failed to appreciate the importance of the colonial question. For them the world did not exist outside of Europe. They could not see the necessity of coordinating the revolutionary movement of Europe with those in the non-European countries. Instead of giving moral and material help to the revolutionary movement in the colonies, the members of the Second International themselves became imperialists.

6. Foreign imperialism, imposed on the eastern peoples, prevented them from developing socially and economically side by side with their fellows in Europe and America. Owing to the imperialist policy of preventing industrial development in the colonies, a proletarian class, in the strict sense of the word, could not come into existence *here* until recently. The indigenous craft industries were destroyed to make room for the products of the centralised industries in the imperialistic countries—consequently a majority of the population was driven to the land to produce foodgrains and raw materials for export to foreign lands. On the other hand, there followed a rapid concentration of land in the hands of the big landowners, of financial capitalists and the state, thus creating a huge landless peasantry. The great bulk of the population was kept in a state of illiteracy. As a result of its policy, the spirit of revolt latent in every subject people found its expression only through the small, educated middle class.

Foreign domination has obstructed the free development of the social forces, therefore its overthrow is the first step

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overthrow the foreign rule in the colonies is not to endorse the nationalist aspirations of the native bourgeoisie but to open up the way to the smothered proletariat there.

7. The revolutionary movements in the colonies are essentially an economic struggle. The bourgeois democratic nationalist movements are limited to the small middle class which does not reflect the aspirations of the masses. Without the active support of the masses, the national freedom of the colonies will never be attained. But in many countries, especially in India, the masses are not with the bourgeois nationalist leaders—they are moving towards revolution independently of the bourgeois nationalist movement. There are to be found in the dependent countries two distinct movements which every day grow *farther and farther* apart from each other. One is the bourgeois democratic nationalist movement, with a programme of political independence and the other is the mass action of the ignorant and poor peasants and workers. The former endeavour to control the latter and often succeed to a certain extent, but it would be a mistake to assume that the bourgeois nationalist movement expresses the sentiments and aspirations of the general population. For the overthrow of foreign imperialism, the first step towards revolution in the colonies, the cooperation of the bourgeois nationalist elements *may be* useful. But the Communist International must not find in them the media through which the revolutionary movement in the colonies should be helped. The mass movements in the colonies are growing independently of the nationalist movements. The masses distrust the political leaders who always lead them astray and prevent them from revolutionary action.

8. The real strength of the liberation movement in the colonies is no longer confined to the narrow circle of bourgeois democratic nationalists. In most of the colonies

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towards a revolution in the colonies. So to help overthrow the foreign rule in the colonies is not to endorse the nationalist aspirations of the native bourgeoisie, but to open the way to the smothered proletariat there.

7. There are to be found in the dependent countries two distinct movements which every day grow further apart from each other. One is the bourgeois democratic nationalist movement, with a programme of political independence *under the bourgeois order*, and the other is the mass action of the poor and ignorant peasants and workers *for their liberation from all sorts of exploitation*. The former endeavour to control the latter, and often succeed to a certain extent, *but the CI and the parties affected must struggle against such control and help to develop class consciousness in the working masses of the colonies*. For the overthrow of foreign capitalism which is the first step toward revolution in the colonies the cooperation of the bourgeois nationalist revolutionary elements is useful.

But the foremost and necessary task is the formation of communist parties which will organise the peasants and workers and lead them to the revolution and to the establishment of Soviet republics. Thus the masses in the backward countries may reach communism, not through capitalistic development, but led by the class conscious proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries.

8. The real strength of the liberation movements in the colonies is no longer confined to the narrow circle of bourgeois democratic nationalists. In most of the colonies there

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there already exist organised *socialist or communist parties, in close relation to the mass movement*. The relation of the Communist International with the revolutionary movement in the colonies should be through the medium of these parties or groups, because they *are* the vanguard of the working class in their respective countries. They *may not be* very big today, but they reflect the *desire* of the masses and the *masses* will follow them to the revolution. The communist parties of the different imperialistic countries must work in conjunction with these proletarian parties of the colonies and through them, give all the moral and material support to the revolutionary movements in general.

9. The supposition that, owing to the economic and industrial backwardness, the peoples in the colonies are bound to go through the stage of bourgeois democracy is wrong. The events and conditions in many of the colonies do not corroborate such a supposition. It is true that the revolution in the colonies is not going to be a communist revolution in its first stages. But if from the *beginning, the lead of the revolution* is in the hands of a communist vanguard, the revolutionary masses *would not* be led astray but *would* go straight ahead through the successive periods of development of revolutionary experience. Indeed, it would be very difficult in many of the oriental countries to solve the agrarian problem *along* pure communist principles. In its first stages, the revolution in the colonies must be carried on with a programme in which will *be included* many petty bourgeois reform clauses—for instance, division of land, etc. But from this it does not necessarily follow that the leadership of the revolution will have to be surrendered to the bourgeois democrats.

10. The bourgeois national democrats in the colonies strive for the establishment of a free national state, whereas the masses of workers and poor peasants are revolting even though in many cases unconsciously,

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already exist organised *revolutionary parties which strive to be in close connection with the working masses*. The relation of CI with the revolutionary movement in the colonies should be *realised* through the medium of these parties or groups, because they *were* the vanguard of the working class in their respective countries. They *are* not very *large* today, but they reflect the *aspirations* of the masses and the *latter* will follow them to the revolution. The communist parties of the different imperialistic countries must work in conjunction with these proletarian parties of the colonies and, through them, give all moral and material support to the revolutionary movement in general.

9. The revolution in the colonies is not going to be a communist revolution in its first stage. But if from the *out-set the leadership* is in the hands of a communist vanguard, the revolutionary masses *will* not be led astray, but *may* go ahead through the successive periods of development of revolutionary experience. Indeed, it would be *extremely erroneous* in many of the oriental countries to *try to solve* the agrarian problem *according to* pure communist principles. In its first stages, the revolution in the colonies must be carried on with a programme which will include many petty bourgeois reform clauses, *such as* division of land, etc. But from this it does not follow at all that the leadership of the revolution will have to be surrendered to the bourgeois democrats. *On the contrary, the proletarian parties must carry on vigorous and systematic propaganda of the Soviet idea and organise the peasants' and workers' Soviets as soon as possible. These Soviets will work in cooperation with the Soviet republics in the advanced capitalistic countries for the ultimate overthrow of the capitalist order throughout the world*

against the system which permits such brutal exploitation. Consequently, in the colonies, we have two contradictory forces; they cannot develop together. To support the colonial bourgeois democratic movements would amount to helping the growth of the national spirit which will surely obstruct the awakening of class consciousness in the masses; whereas to encourage and support the revolutionary mass action through the medium of a communist party of the proletarians will bring the real revolutionary forces to action which will not only overthrow the foreign imperialism, but lead progressively to the development of Soviet power, thus preventing the rise of a native capitalism in place of the vanquished foreign capitalism, to further oppress and exploit the people.

11. To initiate at as early a stage as possible the class struggle in the colonies means to awaken the people to the danger of a transplanted European capitalism which, overthrown in Europe, may seek refuge in Asia, and to defeat such an eventuality before its beginning.

M. N. Roy
India

4. Discussion on Roy's Theses in the Second Congress

Roy. Comrades, as a representative of British India I have submitted to the congress and to the commission certain supplementary theses which should be made public here, in view of the fact that they have not been published. I will now read them. (Reads the text of the theses.)

Certain of the alterations which the commission has made in my theses have been accepted by me. I draw the special attention of the congress to these most important questions. I am most pleased that I have the opportunity for the first time to take part in the serious discussion of the colonial question at the congress of the revolutionary proletariat. Until the present time, the European parties did not pay sufficient attention to this question; they were too busy with their own affairs and ignored the colonial question. At the same time these questions are of great importance for the international movement. England is at the present moment the most powerful imperialist state, the chief reason being its vast colonial possessions. It has acquired great importance, power and a firm social position. All this should be looked upon as the result of its colonial possession. And although the same cannot be said of Germany, in view of the fact that this country is at the present time deprived

of its colonies, the question of colonies is nevertheless of significance not only for England. It is necessary that the German comrades should devote their attention to this question for it has required an international significance. The economic interrelation between Europe and the colonies is at the present time the foundation of the entire system of capitalism. Surplus value, which was in the past produced in England, is at the present time partly produced in the colonies. Furthermore, additional products which are manufactured in England itself are exported to the colonies. In this way England has organised her production in such a manner that articles of primary necessity are manufactured by her during the space of three months annually. England has at all times exploited its workers in the most brutal manner. The same system of expropriation, impoverishment and oppression of human personality in the labourer is applied by that country to all subjected nationalities. British India alone possesses a population of not less than three hundred and fifteen millions. Along with British India, England exploits also several millions of coloured people in the colonies. Since the Communist International has decided to take up this question the next step is to find the best way of furthering the development of the colonial movement. Until lately there were in the colonies only bourgeois national revolutionary movements, whose only aim it has been to replace the foreign exploiters in order to be able to do the exploiting themselves.

During the war and immediately after it great changes have taken place in India. While formerly English capitalism had always hindered the development of Indian industry, of late it has changed that policy. The growth of industry in British India has gone on at such a pace as can hardly be imagined here in Europe. Taking into consideration that during recent times the industrial proletariat of British India has increased by 15 per cent and that the capital employed in British Indian industry has risen 2,000 per cent, one gets an idea of the rapid development of the capitalist system in British India. The same also applies to Egypt, the Dutch Indies and China.

At the same time a new movement among the exploited

masses has started in India, which has spread rapidly and found expression in a gigantic strike-movement. This mass movement is not controlled by the revolutionary nationalists, but is developing independently in spite of the fact that the nationalists are endeavouring to make use of it for their own purposes. This movement of the masses is of a revolutionary character, although it cannot be said that the workers and peasants constituting it are class conscious. But they are nevertheless revolutionary. This is evident by their daily activity. This state of the revolutionary movement of the masses opens a new field of activity for the Communist International, and it is only a question of finding the proper methods for gathering the fruits of that activity. Naturally a revolution started by the masses in that stage will not be a communist revolution, for a revolutionary nationalism will be in the foreground. But at any rate this revolutionary nationalism is going to lead to the downfall of European imperialism, which would be of enormous significance for the European proletariat. I conclude my speech with an urgent appeal to the delegates of the congress in no wise to reject that support which the colonial peoples are now offering the revolutionary proletariat (Fifth Session, 28 July 1920, evening).

SERRATI: I was supposed to make a speech, but I prefer to limit myself to a brief remark.

In the theses proposed to the congress on the national and colonial questions by Comrade Roy and Lenin, I find not only some contradictions but also a grave danger for the communist proletariat of the advanced countries, for the proletariat which should be constantly opposed to every class compromise especially in the prerevolutionary period.

The definition of the term "backward countries" is too vague and too indefinite not to be confused with the chauvinistic interpretation of the term.

On the whole the entire struggle for national liberation carried on by the democratic bourgeoisie, even when insurrectionary methods are employed, is not a revolutionary movement. It usually serves the interests of national imperialism striving to rise to the surface, or it serves the interests of the capitalist imperialism of another country in competi-

tion with the dominating nation. The movement for national liberation can be revolutionary only when the working class maintains its own class lines.

The class struggle in the so-called backward countries can be carried on only when the proletariat preserves its independence of the exploiters, even of those bourgeois democrats calling themselves revolutionary nationalists.

Only by means of a proletarian revolution and through the Soviet regime can the subject nations obtain their freedom. This cannot be done by temporary alliances of the communists with the bourgeois parties called nationalist revolutionists.

These alliances only demoralise the class consciousness of the proletariat, especially in the countries where the proletariat has not been tempered in the struggle against capitalism. The lack of clarity in the theses may serve as a weapon in the hands of the chauvinist pseudorevolutionaries of Eastern Europe against Communist International activity. For these reasons I shall have to abstain from the vote.

ROY: Serrati has referred to my theses and to those of Comrade Lenin as being counter-revolutionary.

SERRATI: Oh, no!

ROY: I am sure that no proletarian can regard the assistance rendered to the oppressed peoples in their struggles against foreign oppression as being reactionary. Every national revolution in a backward country is a step in advance. It is unscientific to distinguish the various forms of revolution. Every revolution is one of the varieties of the social revolution. The peoples of the exploited countries whose economic and political evolution has been hampered must pass through the stages which the European peoples have passed long ago. One who regards it as reactionary to aid these people in their national struggle is himself reactionary and the advocate of imperialism.

I protest against Serrati's declaration and request that it be not inserted in the proceedings.

SERRATI: Comrade Roy did not understand my announcement. I said that the theses in the form in which they are presented are not sufficiently clear, and they could therefore serve as a source of misinterpretation by chauvinists and

nationalists. If I believed that the theses themselves were counter-revolutionary, I would find enough courage and frankness within me to vote against them, and it would not be such a great evil either to have someone in a communist congress voting against this form of proposition.

Comrade Roy has said that every revolution has a social character but this is exactly the argument which, during the war, all the compromisers and the accomplices of the bourgeoisie used to advance against us. They told us that a revolutionary war is a social war, that one must take part in it. But we said no; we would not take part in it.

I intended to propose a resolution here but I have not done so because I do not think that the questions can be discussed here with the necessary impartiality. I was going to propose the following resolution: "The congress sends its fraternal greetings to all the peoples suffering under the oppression of the imperialist powers. It stands ready to actively support every movement directed against all exploiters, and it declares that in this struggle against capitalist oppression the proletariat may take advantage of every national insurrection in order to turn it into a social revolution." The thought I express here is perfectly clear. Instead of saying that the Communist Party and the working class can under certain conditions, and in a certain measure, join a petty bourgeois movement, I say the working class can take advantage of a bourgeois revolutionary movement in order to turn it into a social revolution, but one must not support the bourgeoisie even in backward countries, on peril of losing one's class position and class consciousness. In backward countries the masses are even more susceptible to lose their class consciousness than in the advanced countries. The proletariat of those countries has not yet worked out a sufficiently strong class consciousness, and consequently can be easily misled by its leaders...

ZINOVIEV: I move that the debate be closed and that we proceed to the vote. I put to the vote the Theses on the National and Colonial questions.

The theses are adopted unanimously with three abstaining votes.

(The sixth session closed at 5 p.m. on 29 July 1920)

Lenin's Theses on National and Colonial Questions in the Second Congress

We are reproducing below Lenin's theses as adopted at the Second Congress of the Comintern (on 28 July 1920) for the purpose of ready reference. The text corresponds to Lenin's "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" which we find in the *Collected Works* (Vol. 31), except for minor amendments with which it was adopted in the colonial commission after detailed discussion (CI-SHO, p. 103). The actual text is taken from the Oxford edition (CI-JD, 1, pp. 139-44). Our introductory note on "M. N. Roy's Supplementary Theses" has dealt in detail with the colonial question at the Second Congress. The following extracts from the official history of the Comintern will serve as a confirmation as well as additional information.

Already before the opening of the Second Congress, Lenin submitted his "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" and requested comrades from different countries to express themselves on the same. Several delegates sent in their comments and materials which were considered by the author. The colonial commission of the congress, which was presided over by Lenin, carried out a comprehensive collective work. At Lenin's request, the Indian communist M N Roy wrote the Supplementary Theses, which depict the national liberation movement from the viewpoint of the situation in India and other great Asiatic nations oppressed by England. After a detailed discussion the commission adopted unanimously the theses of Lenin with minor changes and the Supplementary Theses of Roy with corrective amendments.

In his report to the congress on the work of the colonial commission, Lenin emphasised that the commission "reached complete unanimity on

all major issues" (CW 31, p. 240). The starting point of the theses as adopted was the definition of the contradiction between imperialism and socialism as the basic contradiction of the new epoch. The entire development in the world, said Lenin, is now determined by the struggle of the imperialist states against Soviet Russia. "Unless we bear that in mind", emphasised Lenin, "we shall not be able to pose a single national or colonial problem correctly, even if it concerns a most outlying part of the world. The communist parties, in civilised and backward countries alike, can pose and solve political problems correctly only if they make this postulate their starting-point" (CW 31, p. 241).

Such a posing of the question leads one to the most important task of the Comintern, viz the creation of a close alliance between the national and colonial liberation movements, against the common enemy—world imperialism, in the form of a group of imperialist powers which are exploiting and oppressing the overwhelming majority of the population of the earth.

Lenin held that the communists of the oppressed countries must become the vanguard in the struggle for national liberation and that they can actually become so under certain conditions. He pointed out the progressive role of the awakening national consciousness of the oppressed peoples and underlined the fact that the revolutionary and nationalist East represented a group of anti-imperialist forces. He decisively opposed every attempt to contrapose the national freedom struggle in the East to the socialist revolution in the West. He repudiated as unfounded the assertion that the fate of the West depended entirely on the stage of the development and the force of the revolutionary movement in the eastern countries.

Simultaneously, Lenin emphasised "the need for a determined struggle against attempts to give a communist colouring to bourgeois-democratic liberation trends in the backward countries" (CW 31, p. 149). Later, in the course of characterising the parties that can be set up in the underdeveloped countries, Lenin emphasised that, for instance in a country like Mongolia, "The revolutionaries will have to put in a good deal of work in developing state, economic and cultural activities before the herdsman elements become a proletarian mass, which may eventually help to 'transform' the People's Revolutionary Party into a Communist Party. A mere change of signboards is harmful and dangerous" (CW 42, p. 381).

How and under what conditions must the Comintern support the national liberation movements which by their class character are bourgeois-democratic? Lenin's theses give a clear-cut answer to this question. They point out that the communists must support every national liberation movement which is really revolutionary and serves the smashing of imperialism. "The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries, but should not merge with it, and should under all

circumstances uphold the independence of the proletarian movement even if it is in its most embryonic form" (CW 31, p. 150).

The tasks of the communist elements in the oppressed countries, said Lenin, must be to create revolutionary parties and not just communist parties in name only, to translate the communist teachings in the language understandable to the people, to forge the links between the toiling and the oppressed masses of these countries and the world proletariat, to rouse the activity and the initiative of the masses, regardless of the level at which they stand, and to lead them in the struggle for the realisation of the most urgent demands of the toilers. Lenin told the communists of the East: "You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification" (CW 30, p. 162).

By advancing in his theses the slogan of supporting the really revolutionary bourgeois-democratic forces in the colonies under the condition that the organisational and ideological independence of the communist elements is safeguarded, Lenin formulated for the first time the basis of the idea of the creation of an anti-imperialist united front.

This was an entirely new principle, and it was opposed at the congress by a number of delegates. For instance, Serrati (Italy) and Sultan-Zade (Persia) asserted that national movements in which the bourgeoisie participates are not revolutionary. In the opinion of Serrati, the support to the national liberation movement led by the national bourgeoisie "can only lead to the weakening of the proletarian class-consciousness". A similar thought was expressed also by the Indian delegate Roy in his theses in their original form. He said that in the colonies and in the dependent countries the movement of the indigenous bourgeoisie for national independence and the movement of the workers and peasants against exploitation stood in sharp contrast to each other and could not develop together.

After a detailed discussion, the majority of the delegates convinced themselves of the untenability of the view of those who held that the national liberation movement could not be an ally of the proletariat in the struggle against imperialism. The congress came to the conclusion that communists must support the indigenous bourgeois-democratic movement, in as much as their objectively revolutionary role is not yet exhausted. At the same time, an agreement between communists and the national revolutionary forces is only possible when the latter agree not to prevent the communists from "educating and organising in a revolutionary spirit the peasantry and the masses of the exploited" (CW 31, p. 242).

5. Theses on the National and Colonial Questions Adopted by the Second Congress

1. An abstract or formal conception of equality in general, and of national equality in particular, is characteristic of the very nature of bourgeois democracy. Under a show of the equality of the human personality in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal equality in law of property owners and proletarians, of exploiters and exploited, thereby deeply deceiving the oppressed classes. The idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of the conditions of commodity production, is turned by the bourgeoisie, using the pretext of the alleged absolute equality of the human personality, into an instrument for combating the abolition of classes. The true meaning of the demand for equality resides solely in the demand for the abolition of classes.

2. As the conscious expression of the proletarian class struggle to shake off the yoke of the bourgeoisie, the communist party, in accordance with its chief task—which is to fight bourgeois democracy and expose its falseness and hypocrisy—should not advance abstract and formal principles on the national question, but should undertake first of all a precise analysis of the given environment, historical and above all economic; secondly, it should specifically distinguish the interests of the oppressed classes, of the

workers and the exploited, from the general concept of so-called national interests, which signify in fact the interests of the ruling class; thirdly, it should as precisely distinguish the oppressed, dependent nations, unequal in rights, from the oppressing, exploiting nations with full rights, to offset the bourgeois-democratic lies which conceal the colonial and financial enslavement of the vast majority of the world's population by a small minority of the wealthiest and most advanced capitalist countries that is characteristic of the epoch of finance-capital and imperialism.

3. The imperialist war of 1914 demonstrated with the greatest clarity to all enslaved nations and oppressed classes of the entire world the falseness of bourgeois-democratic phraseology. Both sides used phrases about national liberation and the right of national self-determination to make good their case, but the treaties of Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest on one side, and the treaties of Versailles and St Germain on the other, showed that the victorious bourgeoisie quite ruthlessly determine "national" frontiers in accordance with their economic interests. Even "national" frontiers are objects of barter for the bourgeoisie. The so-called League of Nations is nothing but the insurance contract by which the victors in the war mutually guarantee each other's spoils. For the bourgeoisie, the desire to re-establish national unity, to "reunite with the ceded parts of the country", is nothing but an attempt of the defeated to assemble forces for new wars. The reunification of nations artificially torn apart is also in accordance with the interests of the proletariat; but the proletariat can attain genuine national freedom and unity only by means of revolutionary struggle and after the downfall of the bourgeoisie. The League of Nations and the entire postwar policy of the imperialist states disclose this truth even more sharply and clearly, everywhere intensifying the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the advanced countries and of the labouring classes in the colonies and dependent countries, accelerating the destruction of petty-bourgeois national illusions about the possibility of peaceful coexistence and of the equality of nations under capitalism.

4. From these principles it follows that the entire policy of the Communist International on the national and colonial question must be based primarily on bringing together the proletariat and working classes of all nations and countries for the common revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the landowners and the bourgeoisie. For only such united action will ensure victory over capitalism, without which it is impossible to abolish national oppression and inequality of rights.

5. The world political situation has now placed the proletarian dictatorship on the order of the day, and all events in world politics are necessarily concentrated on one central point, the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Russian Soviet Republic, which is rallying round itself both the Soviet movements among the advanced workers in all countries, and all the national liberation movements in the colonies and among oppressed people, convinced by bitter experience that there is no salvation for them except in union with the revolutionary proletariat and in the victory of the Soviet power over world imperialism.

6. At the present time, therefore, we should not restrict ourselves to a mere recognition or declaration of the need to bring the working people of various countries closer together; our policy must be to bring into being a close alliance of all national and colonial liberation movements with Soviet Russia; the forms taken by this alliance will be determined by the stage of development reached by the communist movement among the proletariat of each country or by the revolutionary liberation movement in the undeveloped countries and among the backward nationalities.

7. Federation is a transitional form towards the complete union of the working people of all nations. Experience has already shown the expediency of federation, both in the relations of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic with other Soviet republics (the Hungarian, Finnish, and Latvian in the past, the Azerbaijan and Ukrainian at the present time) as also within the RSFSR itself in regard to the nationalities which had neither independent political existence nor self-government (for example the Bashkir and

Tatar autonomous republics of the RSFSR, which were established in 1919 and 1920).

8. On this question it is the task of the Communist International not only to promote further development in this direction, but also to study and examine the experiences of these federations which have arisen on the basis of the Soviet system and the Soviet movement. While recognising federation as a transitional form of complete union, efforts must be made to bring about an ever closer federal association, consideration being given to the following: first, it is impossible for the Soviet republics, surrounded by the imperialist states of the entire world, which are far stronger from the military point of view, to hold out unless they are closely allied with other Soviet republics; secondly, the necessity for a close economic association among the Soviet republics, without which it is impossible to restore the productive forces destroyed by imperialism or to ensure the welfare of the working people, thirdly, the movement towards the creation of a unified world economy on a common plan controlled by the proletariat of all nations. This tendency has already become clearly manifest under capitalism, and socialism will without any doubt carry forward and complete its development.

9. In regard to relations within states, the Communist International's national policy cannot confine itself to the bare and formal recognition of the equality of nations, expressed in words only and involving no practical obligations, to which bourgeois democracies—even if they call themselves "socialist"—restrict themselves.

Offences against the equality of nations and violations of the guaranteed rights of national minorities, repeatedly committed by all capitalist states despite their "democratic" constitution, must be inflexibly exposed in all the propaganda and agitation carried on by the communist parties, both inside and outside parliament. But that is not enough. It is also necessary: first, to make clear all the time that only the Soviet system is able to ensure real equality for the nations because it unites first the proletarians, and then all the masses of the working people, in the struggle against the bourgeoisie; secondly, communist parties must give

direct support to the revolutionary movements among the dependent nations and those without equal rights (e.g. in Ireland, and among the American negroes), and in the colonies.

Without this last particularly important condition the struggle against the oppression of the dependent nations and colonies, and the recognition of their right to secede as separate states, remains a deceitful pretence, as it is in the parties of the Second International.

10. To acknowledge internationalism in words only, while in fact adulterating it in all propaganda, agitation and practical work with petty-bourgeois nationalism and pacifism is a common characteristic not only of the parties of the Second International, but also among those which have left the Second International. This phenomenon even occurs not infrequently among parties which now call themselves communist. The fight against this evil, against deeply rooted petty-bourgeois national prejudices which make their appearance in every possible form, such as race hatred, stirring up national antagonisms, anti-semitism, must be brought into the foreground the more vigorously, the more urgent it becomes to transform the dictatorship of the proletariat from a national dictatorship (i.e. dictatorship existing in one country alone, and incapable of conducting an independent world policy) into an international dictatorship (i.e. a dictatorship of the proletariat in at least a few advanced countries, which is capable of exercising decisive influence in the political affairs of the entire world). Petty-bourgeois nationalism calls the mere recognition of the equality of nations internationalism, and (disregarding the purely verbal character of such recognition) considers national egoism inviolable. Proletarian internationalism on the other hand demands: (i) subordination of the interests of the proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of the struggle on a world scale; (ii) that the nation which achieves victory over the bourgeoisie shall display the capacity and readiness to make the greatest national sacrifice in order to overthrow international capitalism.

That is why, in the states where capitalism is fully developed and which have workers' parties which really are the

vanguard of the proletariat, the struggle against opportunist and petty-bourgeois pacifist distortions of the idea and policy of internationalism is the primary and most important task.

11. In regard to the more backward states and nations, primarily feudal or patriarchal or patriarchal-peasant in character, the following considerations must be kept specially in mind:

(a) All communist parties must support by action the revolutionary liberation movements in these countries. The form which this support shall take should be discussed with the communist party of the country in question, if there is one. This obligation refers in the first place to the active support of the workers in that country on which the backward nation is financially, or as a colony, dependent.

(b) It is essential to struggle against the reactionary and medieval influence of the priesthood, the christian missions, and similar elements.

(c) It is necessary to struggle against the Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asiatic movements and similar tendencies, which are trying to combine the liberation struggle against European and American imperialism with the strengthening of the power of Turkish and Japanese imperialism and of the nobility, the large landlords, the priests, etc.

(d) It is particularly important to support the peasant movement in the backward countries against the landlords and all forms and survivals of feudalism. Above all, efforts must be made to give the peasant movement as revolutionary a character as possible, organising the peasants and all the exploited wherever possible in Soviets, and thus establish as close a tie as possible between the West European communist proletariat and the revolutionary peasant movement in the East, in the colonies and backward countries.

(e) A resolute struggle must be waged against the attempt to clothe the revolutionary liberation movements in the backward countries which are not genuinely communist in communist colours. The Communist International has the duty of supporting the revolutionary movement in the colonies and backward countries only with the object of

rallying the constituent elements of the future proletarian parties—which will be truly communist and not only in name—in all the backward countries and educating them to a consciousness of their special task, namely, that of fighting against the bourgeois-democratic trend in their own nation. The Communist International should collaborate provisionally with the revolutionary movement of the colonies and backward countries, and even form an alliance with it, but it must not amalgamate with it; it must unconditionally maintain the independence of the proletarian movement, even if it is only in an embryonic stage.

(f) It is essential constantly to expose and to explain to the widest masses of the working people everywhere, and particularly in the backward countries, the deception practised by the imperialist powers with the help of the privileged classes in the oppressed countries in creating ostensibly politically independent states which are in reality completely dependent on them economically, financially, and militarily. A glaring example of the deception practised on the working classes of an oppressed nation by the combined efforts of entente imperialism and the bourgeoisie of that same nation is offered by the Zionists' Palestine venture (and by Zionism as a whole, which, under the pretence of creating a Jewish state in Palestine in fact surrenders the Arab working people of Palestine, where the Jewish workers form only a small minority, to exploitation by England). In present international conditions there is no salvation for dependent and weak nations except as an alliance of Soviet republics.

12. The centuries-old enslavement of the colonial and weak peoples by the great imperialist powers has left behind among the working masses of the enslaved countries not only feelings of bitterness but also feelings of distrust of the oppressing nations as a whole, including the proletariat of these nations. The despicable treachery to socialism committed by the majority of the official leaders of that proletariat in the years 1914-19, when the social-patriots concealed behind the slogan of "defence of the fatherland", the defence of the "right" of "their" bourgeoisie to enslave the colonies and plunder the financially depen-

dent countries—such treachery could only strengthen that quite natural distrust. Since this distrust and national prejudice can only be eradicated after the destruction of imperialism in the advanced countries and after the radical transformation of the entire foundations of economic life in the backward countries, the removal of these prejudices can proceed only very slowly. From this it follows that it is the duty of the class-conscious communist proletariat of all countries to be especially cautious and particularly attentive to the national feelings, in themselves out of date, in countries and peoples that have been long enslaved; it is also their duty to make concessions in order to remove this distrust and prejudice the more quickly. Unless the proletariat, and all the working masses of all countries and nations of the entire world themselves strive towards alliance, and unite as one, the victory over capitalism cannot be pursued to a completely successful end.

The First AITUC Manifesto to Workers of India

It is significant that in the same month, viz October 1920, in which the CPI was formed in Tashkent, was also founded the All-India Trade Union Congress, at its first inaugural congress held in Bombay on 31 October and on succeeding days. We are reproducing here the first manifesto issued by the first general secretary of the AITUC, viz Dewan Chaman Lal, to the workers of India. This is not a document of the CPI and its relevance in being included in this collection may be questioned. But the CPI as a party of the working class has from its very inception in India begun its activities in the Indian trade union movement and its central organisation, the AITUC, and soon became an active and leading force in it. This will figure in the documents in the subsequent years.

It is true that the initiative to form the AITUC was taken by nationalists and humanitarians, but the real driving forces behind this development were the spontaneous militant mass actions of the industrial workers themselves, which took a qualitatively new form in the postwar years of 1918-20, and the activities of those democrats who under the impact of the October Revolution and of the ideas of Lenin in India were seeking new revolutionary paths for our struggle for independence and were turning to the formation of the Communist Party, the class organisation of workers and peasants.

In his *India Today* R. P. Dutt has briefly summed up the rising strike movement of 1918-20 in the following words:

"The strike movement which began in 1918 and swept the country in 1919 and 1920 was overwhelming in its intensity. The end of 1918 saw the first great strike affecting an entire industry in a leading centre in

the Bombay cotton mills; by January 1919, 1,25,000 workers, covering practically all the mills, were out. The response to the hartal against the Rowlatt Acts in the spring of 1919 showed the political role of the workers in the forefront of the common national struggle. During 1919 strikes spread over the country. By the end of 1919 and the first half of 1920 the wave reached its height" (IT, p. 405).

The economic background from which this unprecedented strike movement arose were changes that had taken place in India in the course of the heightened exploitation of the country by imperialism in the period of the first world war and in the years immediately following. Firstly, there was a phenomenal growth of industrial labour; according to ILO Report the number of factory workers in India increased between 1910 to 1922 from 5 lakhs to 13.4 lakhs. Secondly, there was a steep rise of prices of consumer goods and therefore of the living costs of workers. Taking the base of price index as 100 in 1914, it became 154 in 1918, 175 in 1919 and 183 in 1920. The profits of cotton and jute millowners also registered a huge rise. Out of 44 jute mills 13 paid dividends of 200 per cent and only 9 paid less than 7 per cent. The situation in cotton mill industry was not different. Thirdly, the millowners refused to increase the wages and they were on the other hand reducing the number of workers. The atmosphere of national political awakening due to anti-Rowlatt agitation and noncooperation movement was another factor which promoted workers' actions.

The spontaneous strike wave was accompanied by early efforts at organising trade unions. Perhaps the very first such effort was in Madras, pioneered by Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar, E. L. Iyer and B. P. Wadia who organised the Buckingham and Carnatic Mill Workers' Union in 1918-19 and led the strike. Wadia's booklet *Aims of Labour Movement in India*, which was published by Mrinalini Chattopadhyaya in October 1920 from Aghore Mandir, Madras, gave scathing exposure of the contemporary labour conditions and labour laws. Wadia was then President of Madras Central Labour Board, Madras Labour Union and M & SM Railway Union in Bombay. J. Baptista, N. M. Joshi, R. S. Nimbkar, S. A. Dange and S. S. Mirajkar and K. N. Joglekar were active among cotton textile workers and municipal workers. In Lahore Dewan Chaman Lal and M. A. Khan were active among railway workers. Swami Viswananda was active in organising the coalminers of Bihar and Bengal and there was organising work being done among the jute workers of Calcutta as well. J. B. Mitter figures as organiser of the strike of Oudh and Rohilkhand railway workers (UP) and there was activity in Kanpur as well.

There is a very interesting reference in the secret weekly report of the Director of Central Intelligence of the British-Indian government in August 1920 (NAI-HPD, August 1920, File No. 110). British police intelligence, spying on the activities of Wadia who had gone on a short visit to England and France after leading the strike struggle in Madras in 1918-19, writes, "Wadia is now in England (end of 1919 or begin-

ning of 1920?—G A.). Shortly before leaving for France B. P. Wadia met Shapurji Saklatvala. . There was agreement between them that Wadia on return to India should concentrate on organising workers in strong trade unions or workers' federations and should find delegates to form Indian trade union congress in cooperation with Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mukund Lal (Sarkar), Chaman Lal and Satyamoorthy and others . . They should act in concert with the Indian Workers' Welfare League in London. Saklatvala promised that he would support strike action sponsored by any organisation acting as the representative of the Indian Workers' Welfare League. He added that Chaman Lal has organised an organisation of Indian railwaymen (in Lahore) and he keeps him (Saklatvala) informed of the progress."

The same report refers to an article by Sylvia Pankhurst in *Workers' Dreadnought* of 3 July 1920, which gives a picture of India industrialising and organising giant strikes. The article is reported to have said, "Already India shows signs of possessing an industrial communist revolutionary movement."

The report of Saklatvala's talk with Wadia as well as the reference to Sylvia Pankhurst's article in *Workers' Dreadnought* are not garbled. We have not succeeded in tracing the copy of the *Workers' Dreadnought* of that date. That was the first weekly organ of the CPGB and Sylvia Pankhurst, its editor, was then a member of the CPGB just founded. Similarly the facts mentioned in the garbled report are authentic. Saklatvala—a founder member of the CPGB—was one of the organisers of the Indian Workers' Welfare League which organised Indian seamen on British and other ships which touched British ports. Later, as we shall see, this Indian Workers' Welfare League was appointed the representative of the AITUC and the services of Saklatvala were recognised in the inaugural session. This is important in as much as it shows that early Indian communists both abroad and in India were connected with the foundation of the AITUC.

When we look into the *AITUC—Fifty Years*, Volume One (a forthcoming AITUC publication with an introduction by S. A. Dange), we find this conclusion corroborated and that the influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution and Lenin was much wider. We take the liberty here to quote some significant facts of the contemporary trade union movement from the addresses and speeches delivered and resolutions adopted at the Inaugural foundation session of the AITUC (31 October-2 November 1920) from that book.

The preliminary note by Dewan Chaman Lal, written after the fifth meeting of the Executive of the AITUC held on 30 July 1921, gives the following facts:

The decision to hold the All-India TU Congress, with Lala Lajpat Rai as the first President was taken in a meeting of Bombay workers held in Parel on 7 July 1920. Bal Gangadhar Tilak was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents together with Joseph Baptista, S. A. Brelvi, C. F. Andrews and Mrs Besant.

The congress was attended by 801 delegates from all over India of some 106 trade unions affiliated and sympathising, which together with miners' representatives represented 5 lakhs of workers (miners represented being 2 lakhs).

Bombay on the eve of the inaugural session was surging with strike activity in cotton mill (Simplex), saw mill, flour mill (Wallace), oil, tramways, Bombay Port Trust Railway and the BB & CI Railways. After the congress, mass meetings of workers were held to welcome British TU leaders who were fraternal delegates to the congress, viz Col Wedgwood, Ben Spoor and Holford Knight.

Mention is made of intense strike activity in Madras, on the North-Western Railway and in the mining area of Bihar and Bengal and their leaders whose names we have given above are referred to.

Lala Lajpat Rai in his presidential address did not talk of class struggle of labour against capital nor international solidarity of the workers of the world against imperialism. But he conveyed the ideas in his own way, showing at the same time how he was aware of the ideas of the October Revolution and its leader Lenin. He told his audience for instance that:

"Militarism and Imperialism are twin children of capitalism; they are one in three and three in one Their shadow, their fruit and their bark, all are poisonous. It is only lately that an antidote has been discovered and that antidote is organised labour" (p. 25).

Referring to the "prejudice" which "organised British capital" sought to create in the minds of the white workers of Europe and America "against us", Lala Lajpat Rai said:

"Any bond of brotherhood or of mutual interest between workers of Europe and America, on the one hand, and those of Asia on the other, would have destroyed the spell by the force of which they exploited and sweated both" (p. 25).

Lalaji because of his long stay in Europe and America was conversant with the experience of European and American labour and socialist movement. After explaining how the European workers had won the vote he says:

"Over and above this, European labour has found another weapon in direct action. On the top comes the Russian worker, who aims to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat" (p. 32).

He added, "We in India have not yet reached even the first stage. The government has not yet given us votes." They keep us disunited and suppress our strikes as in the case of "Lahore railway strike, government press strike at Calcutta and Simla and the Posts and Telegraph strike in Bombay" (p. 32). "Their recent action in prohibiting the importation of Soviet Russia and the Daily Herald of London is an illustration to the point" (p. 33).

Raising in this connection the question why should India be prevented from knowing the truth from socialist Soviet Russia and from the

labour movement of Europe, he said, there are two truths, it is either capitalistic and bourgeois or socialistic and added :

"My own experience of Europe and America leads me to think that socialistic or Bolshevik truth is any day better, more reliable and more human than capitalistic and imperialistic truth" (p. 33).

At the same time he made a significant reference to Lenin's warning against the mechanical copying of European and Russian experience :

"There is no one in India who believes that European and Russian standards of labour can be applied to the India of today. If there were any I would remind him or them of the message of Lenin to Bela Kun* wherein the former warned the latter against the danger of applying Russian standard to Hungary prematurely" (p. 34).

The resolutions passed at the Inaugural session of the AITUC also contain certain interesting facts :

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents of the AITUC at the preparatory Bombay workers' conference held in July 1920, died on 1 August 1920, i.e. even before the Reception Committee held its first meeting (22 August 1920). The condolence resolution passed by the inaugural conference to honour the memory of Lokamanya says he was "one of the Vice-Presidents of the All-India Trade Union Congress, who had always sympathised with and furthered the cause of Indian labour" (p. 37).

Col Wedgwood replying to the resolution greeting him mentioned the fact that he had received a telegram from "the socialists of Madras" which "stated that what the workers demanded was industrial control and land nationalisation, and not any palliatives as profit-sharing and increase as wages." Col Wedgwood said that he was much struck by the telegram which he said was the spirit "so far they had not had in India, but that was the driving spirit of the Independent Labour Party... and of the Council of Action" (p. 41) The socialists of Madras were probably the group which was active in the Buckingham Carnatic Mill strike and the Madras Labour Union headed by T. V. Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar, the famous Tamil writer, and others, which included E. L. Iyer, and Singaravelu who in 1922 founded the communist group

* The reference is probably to Lenin's wireless message of 23 March 1919 to Bela Kun, who headed the Hungarian Soviet Republic formed on 21 March (and which fell on 29 August in an unequal struggle against the superior forces of interventionists and internal counter-revolutionaries supported by social-democratic traitors). In his message Lenin asks Bela Kun to "inform us what real guarantees you have that the new Hungarian government will actually be communist... What does the socialists' recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat really amount to?" Then he warns: "...it would be a mistake merely to imitate our Russian tactics in all details in the specific conditions of the Hungarian revolution. I must warn you against this mistake..." (CW 29, p. 227).

in Madras. T.V did not belong to the communist group, but throughout his career remained a friend of the Soviet Union and a sympathiser of the communist and labour movement

There was a resolution expressing solidarity with the Indian workers of Fiji who were subjected to brutal treatment by the British planters. There was also a resolution gratefully acknowledging "the work done by Indian Workers' Welfare League and by Mr Shapurji Saklatvala on behalf of the workers of India" (p 63). This confirms the role which Saklatvala played in the foundation of the AITUC to which we have referred to earlier.

6. Manifesto to the Workers of India

Workers of India!

The time has come for you to assert your right as arbiters of your country's destiny. You cannot stand aloof from the stream of national life. You cannot refuse to face the events that are making history today for India. You are the mass of the population. Every movement on the political chess-board, every step in the financial or economical arrangements of your country, affects you more than it affects any other class. You must become conscious of your responsibilities. You must understand your rights. You must prepare yourself to realise your destiny.

Workers of India! Your lot is a hard one. How will you better it? Look at the slaves of the Assam tea plantations, now become desperate. Their real daily wages are less than three annas a day prescribed under government acts. They are often victims of brutal treatment, working under the lash of unlimited hours, while some of these plantations pay 20 to 40 per cent dividends. They are death and starvation dividends and it is you, your wives, your children who are the innocent unoffending victims. We call upon you to realise the meaning of this exploitation and offer by special levies from the members of each union what help you can to Mr C. F. Andrews who is fighting at Chandpur the battle of these semislaves.

Workers of India! The earth is your common heritage. It is not specially reserved for professional politicians or the Simla bureaucrats, or the millowning plutocrats. When your nation's leaders ask for swaraj you must not let them leave you out of the reckoning. Political freedom to you is of no worth without economic freedom. You cannot therefore afford to neglect the movement for national freedom. You are part and parcel of that movement. You will neglect it only at the peril of your liberty.

Workers of India! There is nothing in the nature of your union membership to prevent you from joining the Indian National Congress. You will continue to suffer as your Assam comrades are suffering for upholding the cause of freedom. Your masters will go out of their way, as Sir William Vincent has done, to threaten those of your leaders who happen to be noncooperators for an alleged attempt to sow disaffection amongst the workers. You have nothing to fear. It is not a crime to create a repugnance of brutal treatment, of conditions of semislavery and of the horrible exploitation of women and children. You know well enough that it is the influence of these very leaders which has kept the peace and affected a settlement in almost every big strike in India during the past twelve months in spite of every attempt of the employers. Your cause is the cause of humanity. It cannot suffer through misrepresentation.

Workers of India! There is only one thing for you to do. You must realise your unity. You must solidify your organisations. Do not look for salvation to the Factory Act. The law cannot give your unity. The law cannot create in you the spirit of brotherhood. That must be your own work. Spoliation of the workers is the cry of the capitalists in field and factory. Let unity and brotherhood of man be your watchwords. Your salvation lies in the strength of your organisations. Cling fast to them. Cast all weakness from you and you will surely tread the path to power and freedom.

D. CHAMAN LALL
General Secretary
All-India Trade Union Congress



Abaninath Mukherji

Formation of CPI in Tashkent

In the general introduction we have set forth the background of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent and given some details about the lives of some of the foundation members. M. N. Roy has already been covered. Here we give brief documentation of the lives of Abaninath Mukherji, M.P.B.T. Acharya, Mohammad Shafiq, Mohammad Ali (Sepassi) and of three others who joined a little later in Tashkent itself. Rest of the Muhajirs like Mir Abdul Majid, Ferozuddin Mansoor, Shaukat Usmani, Ghaus Rahaman, Fazl Ilahi Qurban and others, who played an important part in the early history of the party in India, joined in 1921 in Moscow.

Abaninath Mukherji

He was born in Jabalpur on 3 June 1891. He hailed from a village in Khulna. His father's name was Trailokyanath Mukherji (of Bilplav) Abaninath Mukherji by Anita Roy (his niece), Calcutta, 1969). After finishing his education he went to Ahmedabad to get training in weaving and was later employed as an assistant weaving master in Banga Laxmi Cotton Mill in Calcutta. In 1910 as a young man of 20 he went to Japan and later to Germany to get further training in textile engineering. He has stated himself that he entered the socialist movement while still a student in Germany in 1912. After his return in December 1912 he was employed in Andrew Yule Mill in Calcutta and later took a job as a technical teacher in Prem Mahavidyalaya, Vrindaban, of Mahendra Pratap.

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Department records describe him as "an active conspirator in the Indo-German plot during the war" and as being in league with some of the Allpore conspirators (NAI-HPD, Part B of 1924, File No. 350). While in Japan he "was selected by Bhagwan Singh as a messenger for India and sent to Shanghai where he was fully instructed by Rash Behari Bose as to his assigned role in India and was also supplied with a list of names, which were noted in his diary, but unfortunately in course of his India-ward journey, he was arrested at Singapore in September 1915" (Uma Mukherji, *Two Great Indian Revolutionaries*, p. 42). He was in prison in Singapore (Fort Canning) for two years from September 1915 to the autumn of 1917, when he made his daring and successful escape.

While in custody in Singapore he is alleged to have made two statements to the police, one on 13 October 1915 and another on 17 September 1916. Uma Mukherji (*ibid*, p. 141) states that these statements are to be found in the National Archives. But a later document from which we quoted above states in a "marginal note" that both the documents, viz (1) a brief sketch of his career (NAI-HPD, September 1916, File No. 16) and (2) his statement (NAI-HPD, November 1916, File No. 44), "are destroyed".

Much has been made of these two facts, the seizing by the police of the diary containing addresses of Indian revolutionaries from him, and the statements he is said to have made to the police in Singapore. Some Indian revolutionaries when they met in Moscow in the spring of 1921 denounced him as a spy. But M. N. Roy, who had no love lost for Abani, did not at all take this view and defended him on this point at that time.

There are two versions about Abani's escape from Singapore. According to the pamphlet written by his niece, Anita Roy, Abani was sentenced to death after court-martial proceedings and the date of the execution was fixed some time in March 1917 but he is said to have escaped long before the date. But according to the *New Times* article, which bases itself on the statements of Rosa Fitingova, Abani escaped from Singapore in the autumn of 1917. In the general introduction we have given M. N. Roy's version of the Abani's Singapore incarceration and escape, which underplays the daring nature of the same. Abani does not seem to have left any written memoirs. One has to rely on what he told his contemporaries and colleagues and on the Singapore police and army records which are not available. Weighing all the material available to the writer he is inclined to conclude as follows:

Singapore police or army authorities do not seem to have got any new information from Abani's statement. He was threatened with court-martial proceedings but the same do not seem to have taken place or concluded. He was kept together with German and other war prisoners in Fort Canning and perhaps was getting similar facilities, such as

being taken out for sea-bath on the beach. He seems to have made a daring use of the latter facility to make good his escape.

Abani probably got a lift in a fishing boat and later was taken aboard a neutral steamer. This is how he seems to have reached Java, which was then a Dutch possession. This was in the closing months of 1917 and Abani seems to have remained in Java for two years up to the end of 1919. In the general introduction, we have compared Abani's two years' stay in Java with Roy's two years' stay in Mexico roughly about the same time. Abani worked his way to get in touch with Javanese revolutionaries who were in contact with Dutch communists.

Dr Bhupendranath Dutta mentions that Abani travelled from Sumatra (?) to Holland, as a Malayan servant of a Dutch gentleman, probably on board a Dutch ship. Dr Dutta mentions meeting Abani in Berlin soon after he met Roy for the first time there, i.e. in the beginning of 1920 (ARI, pp. 250-51). Roy's version is slightly different: "Employed as a steward on a Dutch ship he reached Holland and saw Rutgers with the letter of introduction from common friends in Java. The story (of his escape from Singapore—G.A.) was hardly convincing. There were gaps which could not be easily filled up. Yet, he was the first Indian communist I met" (RM, pp. 296-97).

Dr Dutta also mentions that Abani went back to Holland and returned soon after with a "mandate" from someone in Holland to enable him to be accepted as a delegate to the Second Congress of the Comintern (ARI, pp. 251-52). It is known from other sources that Rutgers on behalf of the West European Bureau of the CI was in charge in Amsterdam and Berlin to arrange the despatch of delegates to the Second Congress. Abani, who had adopted the pseudonym of Dr Shaheer in Java, took with him a letter of introduction to Rutgers who recommended him to be accepted as a delegate. Roy confirms this: "He brought for me a letter from Rutgers, who wrote that Dr Shaheer was extremely eager, and the Bureau did not think it would be wise to disappoint him" (RM, p. 298).

All this proves that in Java Abani came into contact with revolutionaries—Indonesians as well as Dutch—who made him communist and recommended him strongly to Rutgers in Amsterdam. That is why we compare Abani's Java period to Roy's Mexico period, with the difference that we have from Roy a detailed account of his Mexico period in his *Memoirs*, while we have nothing at all from Abani about his Java stay.

As stated earlier, both Abani Mukherji and M.P.B.T. Acharya are in the list of delegates to the Second Congress of the CI given in the official report (Russian). They were delegates from "British India" and not from the Communist Party of India which was not in existence then. Abani is listed as a *leftwing socialist* while Acharya is mentioned as a representative of Indian Revolutionary Association formed in Tashkent (information from Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute got by Chinmohan Sehanobis). According to *New Times* (1967, No. 14, pp. 10-13), "Abani

Hindustan Labour and Kishan Party and to formulate its manifesto, which we print further on among the documents of 1923.

Abani did not come to India on behalf of the Comintern or of Roy who was a member of the Eastern Bureau of the CI. He came with the help of the group of Indian revolutionaries in Berlin and with a view to establish his bona fides and to expose Roy if possible. Roy as soon as he came to know that Abani was preparing to leave for India got a circular issued from the CI to the groups in India stating that "Mukherji has no connection with CI whatsoever . . . we have absolutely no confidence in him. . . We refute his insinuations against Comrade Roy. . . (who) is the only person authorised by CI to do Indian work. . . ECCI is now investigating the activities of Mukherji. . . We ask you so send all information you have in the matter." This circular, copies of which were sent to India by post and intercepted by the British-Indian police and produced in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case as Prosecution Exhibit No 45A, is dated 2 October 1922. This means it was sent out before Abani reached India which was in the end of December 1922.

Whether Abani came to know of this circular in India is not known. But he tried to send a letter to Zinoviev—the then president of the CI—in which he stated that all the contacts of Roy in Bengal including the group led by Muzaffar were unreliable. This letter in a handwritten form fell into the hands of Muzaffar Ahmad before typing and despatching, and he sent it on to Roy as a proof of Abani's perfidy. Muzaffar had already received a copy of the CI circular against Abani. He understood the circular to mean that Abani was already expelled by the CI and refused to see Abani when the latter contacted. Abani's letter to Zinoviev was also intercepted by the police, its photo-copy was later produced in the Kanpur Case.

The original however reached Roy, who is alleged to have forged into it something to discredit Abani further in the eyes of the CI but this forgery was detected later. This is the story that Muzaffar Ahmad gives. Whatever that be, Abani was not "expelled by the CI". The "investigations" instituted against him seem to have exonerated him, and we find that even before 1927 he is a member of the Institute of Red Professors and is credited with the authorship of *Biography of Lenin, White Terror in India, Rural India* (C. Kaya—Communism in India, 1927, cf appendix "Who's Who").

Abani does not figure in the Fifth Congress of the CI (17 June-8 July 1924) nor in the Sixth Congress (17 July-1 September 1928). In those days he was probably working in one of the departments of the CI which he continued to do in the early thirties according to information available from reliable sources in Moscow. But in the thirties till his demise some time after 1937, his main work was with Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (Leningrad) as we learn from his file in its archives. There he is listed as a specialist in Indology who later became the president of All-Union Association of Orientologists. He was working in the institute as well

and Acharya met Lenin again (?) at the Second Congress of the Communist International in the summer of 1920 which they attended as delegates". This "again" refers only to Acharya who had met Lenin in May 1919 together with Mahendra Pratap, Barakatullah and Abdul Rab while Abani was meeting Lenin for the first time.

After the Second Congress Abani left with Roy for Soviet Turkestan. He attended the Congress of the Peoples of the East held at Baku in September 1920 in accordance with the decision of the Second Congress as one of the Indian delegates. Later he was in Tashkent and was one of the foundation members of the CPI formed there in October 1920. After Roy left for Moscow, Abani was in charge of the Indian Military School, which was a part of the "plan to form an Indian liberation army" referred to in the general introduction.

Rest of his career after 1920 is set forth here in chronological order for ready reference. Details will come in the appropriate places.

In 1921 he was present in the meeting of the Indian revolutionaries in Moscow, when they were having talks with representatives of the Comintern. He was a delegate to the Third Congress of the CI (22 June to 12 July 1921) with a consultative vote. He was a co-signatory with Roy to a manifesto of the CPI addressed to the Ahmedabad Congress (December 1921), which was drafted by Roy and carried to India by Nalini Gupta.

In 1921-22 beginning Abani worked at the instance of Roy for collecting statistical material for the latter's book *India In Transition* which bears the legend "in collaboration with Abaninath Mukherji" under the author's name. Towards the end of 1922 he left Moscow for Berlin and from there to India in the beginning of December 1922 armed with a credential signed by Barakatullah and Dr Bhupendranath Dutta, on behalf of Indian Committee for the Relief of Famine Stricken Russia. He also carried with him his delegate card to the Third Congress of the CI.

He moved in India illegally from the end of 1922 to the beginning of 1924. As we now know from the Home Department records in the National Archives the British Indian police became aware of his movements, always belatedly, and was never able to trap him. He was present at the Gaya Congress, and is said to have met Dange, Dr Manilal and the Congress leaders. In Calcutta he contacted the Bengal revolutionaries and was sheltered by them and treated with great respect. British Indian Intelligence chief C. Kaye wrote about this as follows: "There is also strong reason to believe that while Mukherji was in India recently he was able to put the Bengal revolutionaries in touch with seamen engaged in smuggling revolvers from Germany and thereby effected the introduction of a considerable quantity of arms" (NAI-HPD, Part B of 1924, File No. 380). This is probably not true and has been put up by Kaye as an argument to prevent Abani being granted amnesty and permission to return to India.

Later he went to Madras and there he met Singaravelu and Dr Manilal and seems to have helped the former in his effort to form the

Hindustan Labour and Kishan Party and to formulate its manifesto, which we print further on among the documents of 1923.

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as in the Communist Academy in Moscow. He was working on a bibliographical work *India in Contemporary Literature*. The file mentioned above records: "Mukherji is an expert in economics and the mass movements in India. He knows modern Indian languages. His knowledge of contemporary India is brilliant. On this he has published several scholarly works. Many of these are devoted to British policy in India."

Like Chattopadhyaya, Abani Mukherji was also a victim of the period of the cult of personality under Stalin.

M.P.B.T. Acharya

His name in the Home Department records is given as Mandayam Parthasarathi Tirumal Acharya. He himself wrote his name as M. Pratiwadi Bhayankar Acharya. Dr B. N. Dutta gives his name as Manduyam Pratiwadi Bhayankar Tirumal Acharya (ARI, p. 17).

Acharya was born somewhere about 1888. He was originally from Mysore but his family was long settled in Madras. Dr B. N. Dutta says he was a relative of Prof Rangachari of Madras Presidency College and was an admirer of Swami Vivekananda in his youth. He left for Britain in 1907-8 for studies but there joined the revolutionary group of V. D. Savarkar. Later he worked with V. Chattopadhyaya and subsequently followed him to Europe and was in the Berlin Committee when the same was founded in 1914 after the outbreak of the first world war.

In 1915 he was in Turkey. There he is reported to have swum across the Suez Canal together with Birendranath Dasgupta, to contact soldiers in Indian Army to carry revolutionary propaganda to them (ARI, p 17). Later he was in Kabul up to 1918. At the end of 1918 or the beginning of 1919 Acharya and Abdul Rab followed Mahendra Pratap into Soviet Russia. When Mahendra Pratap and Barakatullah met Lenin in May 1919 in Moscow, both Acharya and Abdul Rab were with that delegation.

In the course of the year 1919 both Abdul Rab and Acharya were active in Soviet Turkestan in forming Indian Revolutionary Association there. Acharya was moving between Kabul and Tashkent in these days. Mohammad Shafiq, who came to Tashkent as an early communist in the beginning of 1920, met both Acharya and Rab and described them as communists. As stated earlier Acharya attended the Second Congress of the CI and is listed as a delegate from the Indian Revolutionary Association of Tashkent.

After the Second Congress he returned to Tashkent where he became a foundation member of the CPI formed in Tashkent in October 1920 and a member of its executive. The documents printed here also record the differences he had with Roy. In 1921 he was present in the meeting of the Indian revolutionaries and was siding with Chattopadhyaya. After the negotiations fell through Acharya seems to have left for Berlin some time in 1922 beginning. In the twenties he worked together with Chattopadhyaya first in the Indian Independence Committee and later in the

League against Imperialism doing secretarial and typing work in which he was expert. In those days he held anarcho-syndicalist views and was critical of the Communist International (editor's personal experience). He remained in Berlin even in the early Hitler period and returned to India in 1935. *Praja Mitra Kesari*—a Gujarati weekly of Lotwala—published in 1935-36 a series of articles by Acharya giving his own autobiography (*Life of Lotwala*, Indulal Yagnik, pp. 76-78). Unfortunately these have not been traced.

Mohammad Ali (Sepassi)

His real name was Khushi Mohammad. According to police record he is the son of Jan Mohammad of Navanshahar, Jullundur district. In February 1915 as a young student he joined a batch of patriotic Muslim students who crossed over secretly into Afghanistan in order to conduct the fight against the British. In March 1916, he was probably one of the many secretaries of "provisional government of free India" formed by Mahendra Pratap. Kaye's "Who's who" in his *Communism in India* (1927) credits him with being entrusted by Mahendra Pratap with the mission to carry the "golden tablet" message to the tsar of Russia. Mohammad Ali seems to have actually crossed over into Soviet Russia for the first time in 1919 end. We first hear of him in Tashkent as one of the founder members of the CP (October 1920). Rafiq Ahmed mentions meeting him in the Communist University in Moscow in the beginning of 1921. In 1922 he was posted in Kabul by Roy to man the revolutionary centre there. According to Muzaffar Ahmad he managed to call his friend Ghulam Hussain from Lahore, made him a convinced communist after a detailed discussion and sent him back to start one of the first communist papers in India, viz *Inqilab* in Urdu (MCPI, pp. 118-19).

In 1923 he returned to Moscow and Berlin and was sent out by Roy in February 1924 to Pondicherry as a courier. Under British pressure the French authorities deported him. Later he was functioning in Paris on behalf of the Foreign Bureau of the CPI. This Foreign Bureau formed by M. N. Roy towards the end of 1924 consisted of himself, Clemens Dutt and Mohammad Ali. The Constitution of the CPI adopted in May 1927 and printed in the Annual Report of the CPI, 1927, contains an article defining the Foreign Bureau and its work. Mohammad Ali was a delegate from India at the Sixth Congress of the CI and the speech he made at the same is reported in *Inprecor* under the pseudonym of Mahmud.

Mohammad Shafiq

We have already given his life sketch in the course of an introductory note to Zamindar in the foregoing pages. He was sentenced in one of the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases, viz *Crown vs M. Shafiq*, to 3 years' rigorous imprisonment in April 1924. After his release in 1927 he was served with restrictive orders. In the beginning of 1928, Shafiq left

secretly for Moscow together with Shaukat Usmani, Masood Ali Shah and Habib Ahmed, and the first three were accepted as delegates from India to the Sixth Congress of the CI. The communication repudiating them reached the CI only after the congress was over. The speech made by Shafiq at the congress appears in the *Inprecor* under the pseudonym of Raza. He returned to India some time in 1932, when he wrote a letter to Shaukat Usmani in Meerut jail to which Muzaffar Ahmad refers in his book (MCPI, p. 452). After that Shafiq seems to have gone out of politics.

Mian Akbar Shah

Born in 1900 in a peasant Pathan family, resident of Badrashli village, Nowshera (NW Frontier Province), Akbar Shah left for Hijrat in the summer months of 1920. As a young student, one of the 200 Muhajirs who crossed over into Soviet Russia, he was among the 20 or so who joined the Indian Military and Political School started by Roy in Tashkent under the auspices of the Comintern. In September 1920 he attended the Baku Congress of the Oppressed Peoples of the East together with Masood Ali Shah. In December 1920 he joined the CPI formed in Tashkent as a candidate. After the Tashkent School was closed at the end of 1920, he went with other Muhajirs to Moscow where he joined the Communist University for the Toilers of the East and studied in the same for nearly a year. He returned to his home town secretly in the summer of 1922 and was arrested a few years later and was the principal accused in the Tashkent-Moscow Conspiracy Case (Crown vs Akbar Shah and 7 others). He was sentenced to 2 years of RI on 18 May 1923. In the late thirties he joined the Forward Bloc and played an important part in 1940 together with Bhagat Ram Talwar in arranging the escape of Subhas Chandra Bose from India.

Abdul Qader Sehrai

He was born in 1901 and a resident of Peshawar. He was one of the 200 Muhajirs who crossed over into Soviet Russia in the autumn of 1920 and one of the 20 or more who were in the Indian Military and Political School in Tashkent and later in the Communist University for Toilers of the East in 1921. Rafiq Ahmed describes that Abdul Qader was wounded in the leg by the shot fired by a Red Army man when the former rushed out to see the fire which had broken out in an army magazine in Tashkent. He was treated in the hospital and when the wound healed he was sent to a sanatorium.

The record published here says he was made a candidate member of the CPI in Tashkent in December 1920. Rafiq Ahmed says he was made a party member later when he was in the Communist University in Moscow in 1921. He returned to India in 1922 and was arrested and tried in the Peshawar Conspiracy Case, Crown vs Akbar Shah and seven others. He was acquitted.

About his subsequent life Rafiq Ahmed gives the following details: "After his release he did not keep silent. He started writing articles in English papers against Russia and the Communist International. Before migration (Hijrat) also he had good relations with British officials. He used to teach them Pushto. Now he teaches Pushto in London" ("Unforgettable Journey", unpublished Mss, dated 29 July 1967).

Masood Ali Shah

He was one of the youngest Muhajirs who crossed over into Soviet Russia in 1920. He was both in the Tashkent School (1920) and in the Communist University in Moscow in 1921. He attended the Baku Congress of the Oppressed Peoples of the East and in the summer of 1922 was present at the Fourth Congress of the CI as a delegate (?). This latter fact is mentioned by Nalini Gupta in his statement to the police.

He returned to India in December 1921 but was not arrested in any of the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases. He went back to Moscow in June 1922. Shaukat Usmani, who returned to India after Masood, i.e. in 1922, wrote a letter to Roy stating that Masood Ali Shah was a British spy and such enemy agents must be "crushed". Usmani in his unpublished memoirs mentions this letter which he says was also produced in the Kanpur Case. Cecil Kaye, the British Indian intelligence chief in the early twenties, gives the following account of Masood Ali Shah in his *Communism in India* (1926, p. 18):

"He reached India before Shaukat Usmani and went to his house, where he remained quietly for some considerable time; but eventually returned to Moscow and thence went to Berlin to meet Roy. In the meantime, Roy had received letters from India denouncing Masood Ali Shah as a spy and, affecting to believe his denial, sent him on a special mission to Moscow, where he was arrested and imprisoned. He managed to escape from prison and after many wanderings and vicissitudes eventually got back to India, cured of any desire to assist Bolshevik propaganda in general, or Roy in particular."

Cecil Kaye in his confidential report *Communism in India*, meant for the use and instruction of senior police officers in their nefarious work of anticommunist persecution, hides the fact that Masood was a spy in his pay even from his police officers.

We now know from top-secret documents of 2 to 10 January 1923 emanating from the British Commercial Mission in Moscow and addressed to Lord Curzon in London, that Masood Ali Shah in his second visit to Moscow in 1922 contacted this mission, showed its Intelligence officer his delegate card of the Fourth Congress of the CI, told him that his code name was Beaumont, that he was in contact with Col Kaye, that in Berlin, where he went from Moscow to meet Roy, he met British intelligence officers, Major Green and Major Foley, and through them he received a telegram from India remitting one hundred

pounds.* He also briefed the intelligence officer in the British Commercial Mission about the movements of Indian revolutionaries in Moscow and Berlin. This document is in the National Archives of India (NAI-HPD, File No. 115 of 1924) because its copy was sent to the Government of India. This is entitled "Masood Ali Shah on Bolshevik Activities" and carries a marginal note in the handwriting of Cecil Kaye and signed by him which is highly interesting.

"The person referred has given his real name throughout and it is, I think, most unsatisfactory that this should be done in reports circulated in England and India." He further says, "Correspondence recently intercepted shows that this man is suspect among Roy's followers", and that he has "telegraphed to IPI (?) to ensure if possible that the man may get away before suspicion becomes certainty. It is not at all impossible that these papers may have assisted to make it so" (emphasis in the original).

This correspondence as well as the marginal note from C. Kaye prove conclusively that Masood Ali Shah visited Moscow a second time as Kaye's agent—a fact which Kaye does not state in his *Communism in India—1926*, probably fearing leakage, as it was meant for a wider circle of senior and police administrative officers. This is further clear from the fact that in his marginal note on the "secret" correspondence of January 1923 he says it unsatisfactory that Masood's real name should be mentioned though it is only meant for top Home Ministry circles in Britain and India, and that he takes some steps to minimise the harm already done by this, so that he (Masood) gets away presumably from Moscow, where he knows he has gone before the "suspicion becomes a certainty".

By this time, early 1923, Kaye does not know of Masood's arrest in Moscow and his subsequent escape, a fact which he records in his confidential report of 1926 quoted above. This incident is also mentioned by Dr. Bhupendranath Dutta:

"There was a Muhajir youth who came to give the writer a send-off when he was leaving Moscow.** It is said that later he was caught red-handed as a British spy and thrown in jail. Roy himself told me this. But later he escaped jail by some inscrutable device, came to Berlin and then went back to India" (ARI, pp. 332-33).

It should be noted here that M. N. Roy does not mention Masood Ali Shah at all in his *Memoirs*. Was he really arrested and jailed in Moscow and escaped from a Soviet prison? Muzaffar Ahmad who quotes the abovementioned documents—though not the marginal note of Kaye—does not believe this (MCPI, p. 446) and surely it is difficult to believe

* Before that in Persia, on his way to Soviet Russia, he contacted the British intelligence officer named Rankine.

** On p. 298 Dr Dutta also relates this event: "When the writer and Luhanj were boarding the train to Berlin (from Moscow), Ali Shah came to give them a send-off."

that an Indian youth made good his escape from a Soviet jail. But then it is equally difficult to believe that he contacted the British Commercial Mission in Moscow twice without being detected by the Soviet intelligence. It is quite possible that he was detained (not jailed) and kept under surveillance for inquiry and he gave the slip to the watchers and escaped. There is another possibility. If he was detained like that in Moscow in 1923, when he (Masood) was a candidate member of the CPI, Roy would surely come to know of it and he might have secured his release, kept him with him for some time and then sent him back to India.

When did Masood return to India? Cecil Kaye says he "got back to India after many wanderings and vicissitudes cured of any desire to assist Bolshevik propaganda in general, or Roy in particular" We do not know what story Masood gave to Cecil Kaye on his return, obviously not the whole truth. Because the present writer has it from S. V. Ghate, that Masood contacted him in Bombay some time at the end of 1925, on the eve of the First Communist Conference (Kanpur) and produced a credential signed by Evelyn Roy which was safely sewn in the cuff of his shirt sleeve. The brief "credential", Ghate told me, stated in substance, "He is a good boy—you can take him for work and to begin with take him with you to Communist Conference in Kanpur". This note is plausible.

Roy was getting reports from the end of 1924 and in 1925 from the press, that one Satyabhakta had formed an open Communist Party in Kanpur and he had convened the First Communist Conference to meet in Kanpur at the same time as the Congress session and had invited communists from all over India. We have it from the correspondence of Roy in 1925 that he was much intrigued by these press reports and wanted to get a full report of the forthcoming conference. It is strange that Roy should use Masood of all persons as a courier for this job. Masood must not have disclosed to Roy all his doings in Persia and Berlin and must have given some lying explanation why he contacted the British Commercial Mission. Roy seems to have believed him and took him to be a fairly honest comrade, though erratic. Whatever that may be, Ghate told me that he asked Masood to join him when he boarded the train for Kanpur and gave him the date and the train time; but Masood did not turn up at the station.

Ghate told me further that Masood contacted him again some time in 1926 in Bombay and confessed to him that he was working for the police and this came about after his first return from Moscow in December 1921, when his father took him to a very high police and intelligence chief and told him (Masood) to do what the police chief wanted him to do if he wanted to escape being put into jail. Masood did not give Ghate any more details. Ghate gave the writer this information while discussing with him the India Office documents quoted by Muzaffar Ahmad in his book and the full texts of which I later secured from the National Archives and showed them to Ghate.

It is clear that Masood was playing as a British agent a double game in his second visit and after. Kaye's statement that he was cured of his desire to assist the Bolsheviks and Roy, after he returned from his second visit, is made to hide his real role. Though he delivered Roy's message to Ghate he did not turn up for going to Kanpur and later confessed that he was working for the police Muzaffar Ahmad, in an interview he gave to P. C. Joshi on the reminiscences of his party life, told him that Masood Ali Shah after his second return from Moscow was given a job by the Divisional Commissioner Kearn of Meerut. He was made a naib-tehsildar. He retained the job till the beginning of 1928 and then resigned. Having bungled and got himself exposed in Moscow, his principles were now withdrawing him and keeping him in cold storage for some time. This becomes clear from his subsequent new adventure.

In the beginning of 1928, after he gave up the job, he again got into touch with Shafiq and Habib Ahmed in Delhi, and these two in their turn approached Shaukat Usmani.

Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography says that in the beginning of 1928 Shafiq, whose restrictions were now relaxed, and Habib Ahmed came to Delhi and met him. They suggested to him the idea that they should all go again to Moscow to renew their communist education. Shaukat Usmani says he fell in with their idea. At that time Usmani says he was living in Delhi with Ferozuddin Mansoor and he suggested to Shafiq and Habib that Feroz be also consulted. Shafiq refused, because he said Feroz would not agree to anything without consulting the party leadership and especially Bradley and Spratt who were then in India working with the party leadership on behalf of the Comintern. Shaukat Usmani then himself contacted the party leadership: "I came down to Bombay in April 1928 to consult party comrades. Bradley vehemently opposed my going away although I had asked for no mandate to represent the party in Moscow in any capacity." He adds, "my other comrades took the same line", and says, "Disappointed with the approach of the party in Bombay, I returned and fell in line with Shafiq's project."

Usmani says when he told Shafiq and Habib Ahmed his decision to accompany them, they then told him that Masood Ali Shah was also going with them. Usmani says he was "aghast in amazement" and asked why take with them a man who had "darkened his past". Usmani made two specific charges against Masood, and Shafiq gave some sort of explanation to both to quieten Usmani's conscience. These two charges though vaguely made confirm the account we got from the police records quoted above.

The first charge was: He had surrendered himself to the government on his arrival from Moscow. Shafiq explained if he did so he did it under Roy's instructions. Shafiq was the general secretary of the CPI formed in Tashkent and Moscow and indicates that in the latter half of 1921 Masood left for India. Did Roy tell him to report himself to the police

so as to avoid arrest and be in a position to return and act as courier? We do not know. He did go back but as an agent and spy of the British and he could not have gone as Roy's courier because between December 1921 when he arrived and in June 1922 when he went back he had hardly done anything to contact anyone in India or get any political reports as far as we know.

The second charge of Usmani against Masood was that he had violated the Soviet law during his previous visit in 1923 and he had admitted himself to that. Usmani also says in another place, "He is not welcome in Moscow. Why take such a man with us?" So Usmani knew of Masood's second visit to Moscow. Did he know that he had become Kaye's agent and had contacted British intelligence officers in Persia, Berlin and Moscow, that he had a code name "Beaumont" and had received 100 pounds by telegraph from India through British intelligence channels? This Masood never revealed to his comrades. But he seems to have told them that while in Moscow a second time he was detained for inquiry and had managed to escape before it was complete and suspicion on him was cleared. This is why Shafiq and Masood told Usmani, "He (Masood) was going to surrender himself to the Soviet and that was to clear his past and get his acquittal."

Usmani and Shafiq accepted Masood's explanation because he told them a half-truth and not the full story. He was not detained in Moscow because he had reported to the police in order to avoid arrest. Other Moscow-returned Muhajirs also reported themselves to the police but some of the important ones were arrested and tried in the Peshawar Conspiracy Cases. Masood's record was on a par with those others tried in the Peshawar cases and he would have been arrested had he not agreed to act as a police agent which he did as he confessed later to Ghate and as the record reveals. But all this he kept back from his comrades.

What happened to Masood when these four reached Moscow is told by Usmani. He did surrender himself to the Soviet authorities. Usmani says further, "Different rumours about his fate prevailed during our Meerut trial and I do not know about their truth or otherwise... Masood Ali Shah was an unfortunate man. He had entered too much into trust and confidence of M. N. Roy and what he did of this confidence, how he used it was not known to anyone of us studying in Moscow" This means Usmani still thinks that all that Masood did was on Roy's instructions. This is not at all true and this means that Masood never disclosed to them what he really did and under whose instructions.

It should be stated here that in his unpublished autobiography Shaukat Usmani now admits that it was wrong on his part to go on that trip: "I should be frank enough to state that I was wrong. I ought to have given up this trip for a better occasion. But what they call destiny was working against me and my sun of reputation had to set. My downward course began with this agreement." This shows that Usmani still

does not realise that what was wrong was not merely that he went with Masood who was suspected as a spy and later proved as one, but that he went against the express instructions of the party. No "destiny" was working against him, and his "downfall" was the result of his own actions, his individualism, his tendency to act on his own and to flout party discipline.

As for Masood Ali Shah, he was arrested in Moscow as soon as those who accompanied him disclosed his identity to the Soviet party and state authorities as the same person who had escaped in 1923 when detained for inquiry. He never returned to India. He was probably executed for acting as a British spy. Muzaffar Ahmad writes that this is confirmed to him by Mahendra Pratap in a letter in reply to his query. Mahendra Pratap was in Moscow in the early months of 1929 when he met Shafiq (ML, pp 156-57) Dr Bhupendranath Dutta also says in his book that Masood Ali Shah was liquidated as a "British spy" (ARI, pp 332-33) Dange also recalls an incident in Meerut jail which also confirms this. After the sessions trial was over and we were awaiting judgment—some time in 1932 when Dange and Usmani were in the jail hospital on adjacent cots—two strangers came to see Usmani, one of them was a high police officer and other was in civilian dress. They talked to Usmani in Persian which Dange could understand a little. From the trend of their brief conversation, Dange says he understood that the civilian was Masood Ali Shah's father and he was asking Usmani, "Where is my son?" Usmani replied, "I do not know, I came away earlier." Father said, "Now I understand what happened to him", and they both left.

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It must be stated here that even before the actual record of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent was discovered and published (1964), Muzaffar Ahmad had already published his book *The Communist Party of India and Its Formation Abroad* (Bengali Edition: September 1961, English Edition: April 1962). He says the following in the preface to the same:

"That the Communist Party of India was first formed abroad is a historical fact. It is also a fact that as early as 1921 it was affiliated to the Communist International. When the history of the Communist Party of India is written in the future, the compilers will have to start from this point.

"In that same year, 1921, efforts to build a Communist Party were also undertaken inside India" (p 5).

The source of his information was Rafiq Ahmed of Bhopal, one of the 20 or more Muhajirs who were in the Tashkent Military School and later in the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in Moscow. "The Story of Rafiq Ahmed's Travels" forms the first chapter of the book. In this Rafiq says:

"Several Indians who were staying in the Soviet Union had earlier declared themselves communists. I have noted already that some of

those who had left India on Hijrat and were admitted to and studied in the Eastern University at Moscow had also joined the party. In 1921 these people came together in Moscow and formed the Communist Party of India. As a matter of fact, the Communist Party of India had been set up towards the end of 1920 at Tashkent, though some of us had not yet joined it. Now we formed the party though we were away from home, we did so because we felt it was necessary. (In 1921 efforts were also being made in India to organise a communist party)" (ibid. p. 33)

Later Rafiq Ahmed wrote a longer and a more detailed version of this "An Unforgettable Journey". This was in 1967, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, on which occasion he was honoured by the Soviet Union as one of the Indians who had participated shoulder-to-shoulder with the Red Army in fighting the counter-revolutionaries at Kirkee, and decorated him with a gold medal. In this unpublished manuscript he gives the list of the names of the Muhajirs who joined the CPI formed in Tashkent and Moscow. He says

"On reaching Moscow Shaukat Usmani also joined the party. After him Ghaus Rahaman, Sultan Mohammad, Mian Mohammad Akbar Shah, Mir Abdul Majid, Ferozuddin Mansoor and Fida Ali Zahid joined the party. Some days later Rafiq Ahmed, Habib Ahmed Salim, Fazl Ilahi Qurban and Abdullah Safdar arrived."

He also mentions Abdul Qader Sehrai, Masood Ali Shah as having been given party membership. He mentions Mohammad Ali (Sepassi) and Rahmat Ali Zakaria as also having joined the party earlier. He concludes:

"Indians who lived in the Soviet Union had joined the Communist Party at the same time. Only the group of Maulvi Abdul Rab remained out. The persons who joined the party after leaving India and receiving education at Moscow University have been mentioned above. They all jointly formed the Communist Party. In 1921 Indian Communist Party was formed in Moscow. We had realised its need. The Communist Party got affiliated to the Third International" (ibid. Mss, p. 34).

Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography also gives an account of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent but that has nothing more that adds to our knowledge. He says, "Rafiq's account in Muzaffar Ahmad's book, *The Communist Party and Its Formation Abroad* is fairly accurate." He only adds that the inauguration ceremony after it was formed on 17 October took place on 7 November 1920 in Tashkent. He also adds that Abdul Rab also joined the party which is incorrect and not confirmed by other evidence.

7. Documents of Communist Party of India in Tashkent

(a) LETTER TO CPT REGARDING FORMATION OF CPI

No. 638
TURKESTAN BUREAU

20 XII 1920
Tashkent

To: The Central Committee of the
Communist Party of Turkestan

It is hereby testified that the Communist Party of India has been organised here in accordance with the principles of the Third International. The Indian Communist Party is working under the political guidance of the Turkestan Bureau of the Comintern.

Secretary in-charge
(Turkestan Bureau)

Roy

Seal

*Tech. Secretary sd. (illegible)

(* who writes the minutes)

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(b) MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 1920

The Communist Party of India founded at Tashkent on 17 October 1920 consists of the following members: (1) M. N. Roy, (2) Evelyn Trent-Roy, (3) A. N. Mukherji, (4) Rosa Fitingov, (5) Mohd. Ali (Ahmed Hasan), (6) Mohd. Shafiq Siddiqi, (7) Acharya (M. Prativadi Bhayankar).

It adopted a resolution establishing the condition of 3 months' probation period (as candidate member) for those persons who wished to join the party.

Comrade Shafiq is elected as secretary.

The Indian Communist Party adopts principles proclaimed by the Third International and undertakes to work out a programme suited to the conditions in India.

Chairman: M. ACHARYA

Secretary: ROY

Seal

* * *

(c) MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA DATED 15 DECEMBER 1920 AT TASHKENT

The following three persons are admitted to the party as candidate members: (1) Abdul Qadir Sehrai, (2) Masood Ali Shah Kazi, (3) Akbar Shah (Salim).

After that a resolution to elect an Executive Committee of three members of the party (was passed). Comrades Roy, Shafiq and Acharya were elected (as the Executive). Shafiq was elected the secretary and Acharya the chairman of the Executive Committee.

It was decided that the party be registered in Turkestan and Acharya is entrusted with this task... (The document is torn below this.)

* * *

(d) EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES NO. 30 MEETING OF THE TURK BUREAU, CC, RCP, AND BUREAU, CC, CPI DATED 31 DECEMBER 1920***On the Agenda***

About the conflict in the Indian section. The conflict took place between members of the Indian Revolutionary Com-

mittee, Comrades Roy and Acharya, on grounds of disagreement on question of methods of work among the Indian emigres in Tashkent. Comrade Roy proposes to leave with the Revolutionary Committee the charge of the work outside the country (USSR) and entrust the work among emigres inside the country to the Turk Bureau of the Comintern. In this way, Comrade Acharya, remaining in the Revolutionary Committee (Indian), has to conduct wide underground work and the question dividing the members of the Revolutionary Committee, therefore, ceases to exist at the moment. Comrade Roy is ready to abide by the decisions which would be taken in the present meeting, and suggests that Comrade Acharya continue to stay in the Revolutionary Committee.

Comrade Acharya considers it necessary to remove Comrade Roy from the work in the Bureau of the Comintern and the Indian Revolutionary Committee as he has lost popularity among the Indians.

The new Revolutionary Committee should consist of two Indians and one representative of the RCP. The Indians should be explained that they would not be forced to join the party. Comrade Roy may be kept for propaganda and lit. work only.

Resolved

1. (a) The composition of the Indian Revolutionary Committee is left intact as before until the meeting of an all-India congress (in Moscow) and until the conflict is resolved in the main by the Executive Committee of the Comintern.

(b) None of the comrades should speak about these disagreements.

(c) The care of the Indian emigrants is temporarily given over to the Tashkent Bureau of the Comintern.

(d) The members of the Revolutionary Committee should leave for Moscow as soon as possible to resolve these problems.

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(e) EXTRACT FROM I. S. SOLOGUBEV'S BOOK "FOREIGN COMMUNISTS IN TURKESTAN" (RUSSIAN)

On 17 October 1920 the Indian Communist Organisation was formed in Tashkent. In its letter to the Central Committee of the CPI, the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International wrote:

"Be it known to all that Indian Communist Party has been organised here in accordance with the principles of the Third International. The Indian Communist Party will work under the political leadership of the Turkestan Bureau of the Comintern."^{*}

In their first meeting the Indian communists adopted a resolution in which is pointed out that those who wish to join the party will have to pass through three months' candidate period. Comrade Shafiq was elected secretary of the organisation."^{**}

Under the Tashkent Lenin Military School for some time there were courses for Indians. In several places in Turkestan, Indian associations existed (p. 56).

^{*} Tashkent Party Archives.

^{**} Minutes bear a circular seal, inscribed with "Hammer and Sickle" with the legend "Indian Committee of the Communist Party" in Russian



1921

Introductory Note

The events and developments of 1921 round which the documents of the history of the CPI of this year are grouped are as follows :

1. The batch of Muhajirs who joined the Military and Political School at Tashkent at the end of 1920 and some of whom joined the Communist Party of India formed there in October, now in the beginning of 1921, proceed to Moscow where they all join the Communist University of the Toilers of the East. We give here two contemporary accounts of the same, one by A. C. Freeman which appeared in the *Soviet Russia Pictorial* in April 1923 and another by Fazl Ilahi Qurban, himself a participant in the school. This latter appeared in the *Vanguard*, a fortnightly published by M. N. Roy from 15 May 1922. We also give a full list of the names of the Muhajirs who participated in the school in 1921-22.

2. The Indian revolutionaries functioning abroad in the period of the first world war and shortly after, through the Berlin Committee and through the "provisional government of free India" in Kabul, now in the late spring and early summer of 1921 send a delegation headed by Virendranath Chattopadhyaya to Moscow to discuss with the leaders of the Communist International and the Soviet government the possibilities of securing help for India's struggle for independence. We have seen earlier how Chattopadhyaya was the first to attempt to contact Lenin and the Soviet leaders from Stockholm in 1917 itself. In October 1920 Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow to prepare for the meeting which could take place only in the early months of 1921. We are giving here an account of this meeting and its outcome mostly based on the accounts of those who participated in it.

3. The Third Congress of the Communist International took place in

Moscow from 22 June to 12 July 1921. We are giving here a write up on the congress focusing the attention mainly on how India and its struggle for freedom as well as the liberation struggle of the peoples of dependent and colonial countries figured at the congress.

4. Coming to the developments in India, we have first the publication of S. A. Dange's *Gandhi vs Lenin*, the foreword of which is dated April 1921 and which was published in the middle of 1921. Here we have our introduction, followed by extracts from the book, Dange's own account of how he came to write the book and his evaluation of the same later

5. The Second Congress of the AITUC was held in Jharia in November 1921. Here we give the background of the contemporary working class struggle, the important resolutions passed and the text of the message received by the congress from Red International of Trade Unions (RILU).

6. In the third issue of 1921, the Communist International published an article—"Present Events in India". It dealt with the political events of 1920—the civil disobedience movement, Moplah rebellion, Assam plantation workers' struggle, etc. It was probably written by M. N. Roy. This is reproduced here.

7. We have the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress. Here we reproduce the manifesto signed by M N Roy and Abani Mukherji which was circulated at the session, preceded by an introductory note giving the background and other details of the manifesto and its impact.

Communist University in Moscow

We are reproducing here extracts from A. C. Freeman's article on Communist University for the Toilers of the East printed in *Soviet Russia Pictorial* of April 1923—an official publication of the Friends of Soviet Russia functioning in New York and formed by communists and communist sympathisers. The text is the one sent by Scotland Yard to the India government (NAI-HPD, Part I, 1923, File No. 103). Muzaffar Ahmad has reproduced the full text from the same source in his book (MCPI, pp. 72-76).-

We are also giving relevant extracts on the same subject from two articles by Fazl Ilahi Qurban appearing in M. N. Roy's *The Vanguard of Indian Independence* in the issues of January and December 1923. We are reproducing here the full list of Indian Muhajir students who studied in this university in 1921-22. Fazl Ilahi Qurban was one of the Indian Muhajirs who crossed over into Soviet Russia in the autumn of 1920 and was himself a student in the communist university.

These documents take the story forward from the formation of the CPI in Tashkent and the closing down of the Political and Military School there—known as Induski Kurs (The Indian School), which took place soon after the conclusion of the trade treaty between RSFSR and Britain in March 1921. Rafiq Ahmed in his unpublished memoirs—"An Unforgettable Journey"—says that he was sent from Tashkent to Moscow in May 1921. He says, when the British-Russian trade agreement was signed the British pressed for the expulsion of the Indians (i.e. Muhajirs) from Soviet Central Asia. As a consequence, first the Tashkent Military School was closed while the Political School continued to function; later even that was closed and all the Indian students there were sent to

Moscow. Qurban in his second article says that in May 1923 the second anniversary of the foundation of this university was celebrated. This confirms Rafiq's statement and we may take that the university was founded in May 1921.

The formation of the CPI in Tashkent is inseparably connected with the Indian Political and Military School functioning in Tashkent in the autumn of 1920 and winter of 1920-21 and which was set up for the benefit of the Indian Muhajir youth and students who had crossed over into Soviet Central Asia to get training in arms for India's independence struggle. Roy's account of the formation of the CPI in Tashkent comes in the course of his description of the Political and Military School he set up with the help of CPSU and Lenin. Roy describes how as a result of the political education at the school and of the general impact of the social revolution in Russia a section of the originally Pan-Islamic and patriotic Muhajir youth turned to communism and began demanding the formation of the CPI there and then. Abdul Rab (Peshawari) and MPBT Acharya, who were in Soviet Russia one year before Roy, had arrived on the scene then and also played a role in this.

Roy dismisses the role played by these two by stating that Abdul Rab was an "impostor" and Acharya was an "anarchist". Roy does not mention the fact that Rab and Acharya had met Lenin in May 1919 as members of Mahendra Pratap's team and that Acharya was a delegate to the Second Congress of the CI together with Abani Mukherji while Roy was a delegate from Mexico. On the other hand, it is not necessary to disbelieve Roy when he says that the initiative to form CPI in Tashkent came from Rab-Acharya group and from the more politically-minded among the Muhajir youth. Roy says he "agreed with the proposal of the formation of a communist party knowing fully well that it would be a nominal thing, although it could function as the nucleus of a real communist party to be organised eventually. An intelligent and fairly educated young man named Mohammad Shafiq, who had come from Kabul with the Acharya group, was elected secretary of the party" (RM, p. 465).

There was another reason why Roy was not keen on forming the CPI at that time. The main thing for him at that time was to organise an Indian Military School for the couple of hundred Muhajir youths who had crossed over into Soviet Russia and by training them to create a nucleus of an Indian liberation army. This was to march through Afghanistan, taking for granted that the Amir would allow that, it was to join forces with the warlike anti-British frontier tribes and to create a liberated area in North-West India at a time when the noncooperation movement would be rising. We have described all this in the general introduction and also how the Soviet government had supplied Roy with two train-loads of arms and trainers. We have also described there how the plan failed because of Amir of Afghanistan's unwillingness to help in anything like this against the British and how Lenin had already warned that this might happen. The point we want to stress

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here is that an Indian Political and Military School functioned in Tashkent between October 1920 to May 1921. The few Muhajirs who joined the party or became communists in October 1920 played the role of persuading the rest to join the school. Roy describes this thus:

"The party was formed. But what should be its activity? A communist party must work among the masses (that they can only do when they return to India). So they had better serve their apprenticeship by endeavouring to influence the cross-section of the Indian masses within our reach... they should try to persuade the rest of the emigrants to attend a series of general political talks preparatory to their admission to the proposed military school" (RM, p. 465).

The school was mainly a military school, political education was only of a preparatory character. It did not include the teaching of communist ideology to the students. As Roy says, the word "communism" was not mentioned in the talks given to the students (RM, p. 466). The military training consisted of "soldiering" for the majority, while the more educated were given training in gunnery and military aviation. The school seems to have continued till the spring of 1921. Roy writes:

"Before the year was out, the Soviet government received a blistering note from the British Foreign Secretary which referred to the Indian Military School at Tashkent as evidence of Soviet aggressive designs against the British empire. As a rupture of the newly established economic relations with Britain would prejudice the painful process of Russian reconstruction, the Indian Military School at Tashkent had to be disbanded" (RM, p. 468).

In the general introductory note to 1917-20 documents we had stated that the disbandment of the Indian Military School was not necessarily due to the Anglo-Russian Trade Treaty but rather because the plan of forming the liberation army itself became untenable due to the non-cooperative attitude of the Afghan government. To clinch the issue let us quote from the reminiscences of a contemporary Soviet military officer who gives the following account of the same developments. N. I. Favrovsky, a deputy member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Turkestan Front and a veteran Communist Party member since July 1917, who was appointed to look after the Muhajirs gives the following account:

"At one of the council meetings, Roy, speaking for the entire group, asked for food, military equipment and assistance in organising military training; of course, we knew what this entailed. When Roy left the meeting after putting his case, there were such remarks as adventurism, fantastic, etc. That was the first reaction and it was followed by more serious consideration. It was decided to give Indian comrades all possible support without however being involved in their plan. That too as far as I know was the attitude of Moscow. Indians were allotted a shooting range of the Chirchik highway near Tashkent and began their military training" (Quoted in *New Times*, No. 14 of 1967, in article entitled "Awakening East—Pages from History").

The article goes on further to state that the Muhajirs "were very enthusiastic, but it was not long before the whole plan had to be abandoned . . The Afghan government categorically refused permission to cross Afghanistan on the way to India. Roy's repeated and insistent appeals to Afghan consulate in Tashkent were of no avail. In the spring of 1921 military training stopped. Some of the Indians decided to return to India illegally, others stayed on in Tashkent, several joined the Red Army and 22 returned to Moscow to study at the Communist University of the Tolders of the East" (emphasis added)

This confirms Rafiq Ahmed's statement that he and the other Muhajirs left for Moscow to join the Communist University in May 1921.

I. Communist University for the Toilers of the East

(a) EXTRACT FROM A. C. FREEMAN'S ARTICLE: "RUSSIA'S
UNIVERSITY OF ORIENTAL COMMUNISTS"

"Communist University of the Toiling East"—this inscription is written in huge letters above the entrance to a large white building near the Pushkin Monument in Moscow. And all through the day one sees eastern students in all sorts of picturesque costumes going in and out of the building. There are Turkomans in high black wool hats, Sarts from Bukhara with bright embroidered caps, almond-eyed Tartars from the Volga and the Crimea, Moslem mountaineers from the Caucasus, political refugees from India, China, Japan and Korea.

The university is not, as one might imagine from its title, primarily an institution for spreading revolutionary unrest throughout Asia. This certainly is one side of its work; the students from such foreign countries as China, Japan, India, Persia and Turkey are most of them accepted upon the recommendation of the Third International. They are undoubtedly expected to go back to their native countries and work for the triumph of the communist idea.

But these foreign students represent only a very small part of the university's enrolment. Most of the Oriental

young men and young women whom one finds studying in the crowded class-rooms of the institution, and living in the various houses which have been taken over as dormitories, come from the eastern and southern provinces of the vast federation of Soviet Republics. And the chief purpose of the Soviet government in maintaining the university is not to turn out professional revolutionaries, but rather to train the future political and economic leaders of the more primitive sections of the republic. Most of the students come from Muhammadan countries, but there is no attempt to cultivate Pan-Islamism or any other religious or nationalist sentiment among them, for Russia herself would be the chief sufferer if a wave of racial or religious fanaticism should unite the innumerable Moslem tribes who are scattered over wide stretches both of Europe and of Asia. The strictly international character of the instruction given in the university was emphasised by one of its leading directors.

"We regard any display of nationalist feeling as the most fatal disqualification for our students", he said. "Of course we teach the students who come from countries outside the frontiers of Soviet Russia that they must fight against imperialism, whether the imperialism comes from within or from without. But this fight must be carried on in the name of international communism and the right of every people to self-determination, not through appeals to racial and religious prejudice and fanaticism."

I asked the director how the courses of study were planned and arranged.

"We have to be very flexible in fixing our requirements for entrance and graduation", he replied. "I doubt if any other university in the world can show such wide variation in the mental background and previous training of its students. We often get Muhammadan peasants from some village in the Caucasus or the Crimea, who have never seen a factory or a large city, who are barely able to read and write, who have not even the most rudimentary ideas about science and literature. And side by side with these we have political refugees from China and India and Japan who hold degrees from Oxford and Heidelberg. We have a large number of courses adapted to the most varied mental pre-

paration. To the bulk of our students, who come from the more primitive and backward parts of European and Asiatic Russia, we try to give a good general training in history, science and literature, along with courses in the fundamental principles of Marxian socialism. We have instructors who can speak all the various native dialects; and then the students usually learn Russian very rapidly."

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I was allowed to inspect the whole university, visiting both the class-rooms and the buildings which are used as dormitories by the students. There was the same contrast between ardent intellectual ambition and scanty material equipment that one finds so often in present-day Russia. The class-rooms were bare and overcrowded; the apparatus used in the physics and chemistry courses was pitifully meagre. But the students, among whom almost every country in Asia was represented, seemed bright and eager to learn and quite undaunted by the cramped accommodations with which they were compelled to put up. One of the most striking things about the university was the number of women among the students, who had apparently discarded their eastern habits of thought along with their veils.

(*Soviet Russia Pictorial*, April 1923.)

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(b) EXTRACTS FROM QURBAN'S ARTICLES

This institution is only for revolutionary students from the eastern nations. All those wishing to join it must be physically healthy, and the descendants of peasants' or workers' families. The sons of Indian clerks can also be admitted. The applicants are required to know the English language. No special certificates of qualifications are necessary, but all those seeking admission must bear a mandate from some working class organisation or from the Indian Communist Party. The course is given in the English language, and some part of it in the vernacular. The programme consists of the following subjects to be completed in one year:

(1) Political Economy, (2) Theory of Historical Materialism, (3) History of Class Struggle, (4) History of Western Labour Movements, (5) Programme and Tactics of the Communist International, (6) Brief Course of Natural Science and Biology, (7) History of India, (8) Russian Language.

This course of study gives the students the fundamentals of social science, and the method of understanding and interpreting current events as well as past history. Able scholars can learn the Russian language sufficiently well to follow the Russian lectures side by side with the English studies. Everyone knowing the Russian language and already admitted to a state institution can join the highest university of social or military science, just as any Russian citizen, if they prove themselves capable of admittance. Food, lodging and clothing, as well as technical equipment, are provided by the state.

I would like to describe the way food is received from the Soviets, cooked and distributed to the students. Our university has one thousand students, boys and girls, representing sixty-two nationalities. We live just like a big, democratic family. One central food organisation of Moscow, the MPO, gives to each a certain amount of food-products fortnightly. The students elect an executive committee to carry on the administration of the whole university, and another communal committee to arrange their food and lodging. There are two big dining halls and a big community kitchen. The food is prepared by the cooks supplied by the university organisation. Every day, twenty-five students take their turn in serving the others. Each serves once a month.

The university has a good hospital, and once a month each student is given a physical examination. There is a big library and reading room, where newspapers in all eastern languages, as well as in English and Russian, are to be had. Frequent meetings are held during the week where current topics are discussed, illustrating the declining power of western capitalism (for instance, the Genoa, Hague and Lausanne conferences). The communal committee holds monthly meetings and gives report of its work. Every member of the commune has a right to criticise the report and examine its accuracy. Here is found the real democratic

spirit and full freedom of the oppressed peoples, who are held in contempt by the oppressing classes in their own countries, and are here given the opportunity to educate themselves and to realise their own value to the community. These are the elements who understand that great men do not create history, but that history throws up great men, in response to objective forces.

The university has a big club where different revolutionary dramas are played by the students. The various nationalities show their home-life in their native science, music, drawing, dancing, singing and the chief European languages are studied during the club hours by various study circles. Club life is quite optional. This is a part of the free life that can only be obtained under the dictatorship of the proletariat, after the overthrow of capitalism. Every Sunday, military drill and instruction is given, and parade is held in the Red Square before the Kremlin. In Russia all workers and peasants are taught to handle rifles and revolvers, and receive military drill.

(*"The Eastern University in Moscow", The Vanguard of Indian Independence, Vol. II, No. 4, 1 April 1923*)

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The second anniversary of the Eastern University in Moscow was celebrated in May of this year. Several of the leaders of the Russian revolution were present to greet the students who were training themselves for work in the eastern countries, and point out to them the significance of their work. The first of the speakers was Comrade Chicherin. The students of various nationalities, particularly from the colonial and semicolonial countries, responded to the greetings of the leaders with revolutionary speeches in their different national languages. This political part of our programme continued until after midnight. Then the concert began, and the various national groups presented revolutionary dramas acted and written by themselves. At the end of the programme, an exhibition of sports was given by the athletic group of the university. National dances, such as Caucasian and Tartar, were also given, so that it was six o'clock in the

morning before the orchestra played the "Internationale" as a sign that the celebration was over.

("Revolutionary Training Schools", *The Vanguard of Indian Independence*, Vol. IV, No 1, 15 December 1923)

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(c) LIST OF MUHAJIRS TRAINED IN THE COMMUNIST UNIVERSITY FOR THE TOILERS OF THE EAST

(i) Names Common to Home Department Document, 1923, and Statement of Fida Ali (Approver in Peshawar Conspiracy Case)

No	Name	If Convicted, Date & Term
1	Habib Ahmed alias Nasim (Sahjanpur)	One year's R.I. 18 May 1923
2	Ferozuddin Mansoor (Lahore)	One year's R.I. 18 May 1923
3	Abdul Majid (Lahore)	One year's R.I. 18 May 1923
4	Fazl Ilahi (Malak) Qurban (Lahore)	Three years' R.I. in Moscow Conspiracy Case, IV, 1927
5	Abdullah (Safdar?) (Lahore)	—
6	Abdul Qader Sehrai (Peshawar)	Acquitted and released
7	Fida Ali (Peshawar)	Turned approver, not prosecuted
8	Akbar Shah (Salim) (Peshawar)	Two years' R.I. 18 May 1923
9	Sultan Muhammad (Rihana, Hazara)	One year's R.I. 18 May 1923
10	Muhammad Akbar Khan (Haripur, Hazara)	Seven years' R.I. 21 April 1923 plus Three years' R.I. 31 May 1922
11	Gaur Rahman (Hazara)	Two years' R.I. 18 May 1923

No	Name	If Convicted, Date & Term
12	Rafiq Ahmed (Bhopal)	One year's R.I. 18 May 1923
13	Ghulam Ahmed Khan (?)	Turned approver, not prosecuted
14	Masood Ali Shah (UP)	—
15	Abdul Hamid Master (Lahore)	—
16	Aziz Ahmed (Lahore)	—

(ii) Names Found Only in Home Department Document

No	Name	If Convicted, Date & Term
17	Abdul Qayyum (Peshawar)	—
18	Abdul Majid (Kohat)	—
19	Abdul Aziz	—
20	Muhammad Said Raz	—

(iii) Names Found Only in Fida Ali's Statement

No	Name	If Convicted, Date & Term
21	Shaukat Usmani	—
22	Muhammad Shafiq	Three years' R.I. 4 April 1924
23	Abdul Rahim	—

2. A Delegation of Indian Revolutionaries Visits Moscow

An important development took place in the early months of 1921 about the time when the Communist University for the Tolders of the East was founded and when the Third Congress of the Communist International was taking place. It has a bearing on the history of the CPI and also on the question of the CI and the Indian national liberation movement. This was the visit of a representative delegation of Indian national revolutionaries to Moscow and their talks with a commission of the Comintern, which took place between March and June-July 1921. We are not in a position to produce any documents regarding this meeting and these talks, though there were documents—namely the theses produced by different groups in the said delegation, which may have been preserved in the Archives of the Communist International, but these are not available to us at the moment.

We have four accounts of this meeting and talks available to us. One is the British-Indian intelligence report as summarised in Lt-Col Cecil Kaye's *Communism in India* and three others by actual participants in the said meeting and talks, viz the account given by M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs*, the other given by Dr Bhupendranath Dutta in his *Aprakashita Rajnaltik Itihas* and the third one given by V. Chattopadhyaya.* The meeting is also referred to by Shaukat Usmani in his unpublished autobiography as well as by Rafiq Ahmed in his unpublished memoirs "An Unforgettable Journey". The latter two, not being participants, do not and cannot say much on the proceedings and outcome of these meetings and talks. It is on the account of Roy and Dr Dutta that we

* Cf his autobiographical speech among the documents of 1917.

have to mainly rely and these especially the latter, give us some idea of the relevant documents and their contents

To begin with we reproduce the tendentious and distorted account which Cecil Kaye gives in *Communism in India* (1926). His conclusion is that the CI decided "in favour of communism as against nationalism, though agreeing to help the latter through the former". This analysis was in line with the tactics of the British government which was to drive a wedge between the rising communist movement and the national independence movement, to project communists as hirelings of a foreign power and to bolster up anticommunist and anti-Soviet tendencies in the national movement—a game which did not succeed by and large. This is what Cecil Kaye writes:

"The conference of Indian revolutionaries proved a fiasco, Roy and Chattopadhyaya disputing leadership and being unwilling to work together. Roy claimed the leadership on the ground that, whatever he might have failed to do, he had won a great victory for Indian revolutionaries by obtaining from the Third International recognition of his Indian Communist Party started at Tashkent. As the conference did nothing but quarrel among themselves, the Soviets intervened. They decided in favour of communism as against nationalism, though agreeing to help the latter through the former; the decision being in favour of the policy of only recognising and giving to help to the communist parties who were themselves permitted, should they so desire, to aid nationalist movements. Roy's group was unconditionally recognised as the one with which the Communist International would work in future, and it was agreed to start 'intensified propaganda in India' for which the Soviet government undertook to provide ample funds. Chattopadhyaya objected, and presented a 'thesis' in dissent—saying the first necessity was the overthrow of the British government in India, after which communism could be introduced, not only in India but in England, where the loss of India would produce poverty and consequent discontent. The Communist International should undertake this itself—it is incumbent on the Communist International to exploit to the utmost extent every available revolutionary tendency in and outside India'. Chattopadhyaya, however, in the end accepted the decision, since the Soviet government refused to afford help under any other condition" (p. 6).

For an authentic account we have to turn to the actual participants, namely to M. N. Roy's *Memoirs*, Dr Bhupendranath Dutta's book and Chattopadhyaya's speech. Of these the second one gives a more detailed account. It would be best if we base our narration on Dr Dutta's account and supplement the same by the facts and comments of Roy and of Chattopadhyaya. The initiative for bringing about this meeting on the Indian side came from Virendranath Chattopadhyaya. This is clear both from Chattopadhyaya's 1934 speech as well as from Dr Dutta's account. It would have been best if one could have got the account of the meeting and the talks from Chattopadhyaya himself. But his comments in his abovementioned speech are meagre.

Chattopadhyaya in his speech says "As I came to Stockholm in the beginning of May (1917) I found a strong (concentration) of international emigrants I enquired if Lenin was still in Stockholm It was a great disappointment for me that I could not meet Lenin then. Already in September 1917, I made contact with Petrograd" This last sentence refers to the manifesto issued by the Indian National Committee in Stockholm to the Petrograd Soviet, which we have already reproduced as a document (1917) and pointed out that the same was very probably drafted by Chattopadhyaya

He says further "Then came the October Revolution which became a decisive factor in my life thereafter. In 1918 Comrade Wronski gave me a telegram calling upon me to proceed there (to Petrograd) Because of various reasons which would take me long to mention here in detail, I could reach Moscow only in November 1920."

It was in this Chattopadhyaya's first visit to Moscow that the meeting of the Indian revolutionaries with CI authorities was fixed We have here the connecting and confirmatory evidence from Dr Dutta, who writes: "In the winter of 1920 Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow and had a talk with the people there before he returned The Communist International authorities there said to him 'You bring other revolutionaries here, set up a committee and begin work' He too agreed to bring the others and accordingly returned to Berlin" (ARI, p. 263).

The background against which the decision of Chattopadhyaya to go to Moscow with a number of Indian revolutionaries was taken is described by Dr Dutta thus: "The noncooperation movement started by Gandhiji was proceeding with full swing All sorts of sensational and false news items were appearing in the local communist (?) press, e.g. the Comintern has sanctioned a million roubles for the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin. A few days previous to that the following had been published 'The powerful movement against the British government that is going on in India is semination and semiproletarian and is being helped from behind by the Communist International.' It was in this situation that Chattopadhyaya returned to Berlin, with the intention of taking a number of Indian revolutionaries to Moscow" (ARI, pp. 267-68).

In the course of the rambling account of persons and events in Berlin that Dutta gives (ARI, pp. 268-78), the following relevant facts emerge:

About the time Chattopadhyaya returned to Berlin from Moscow after his first visit there, Borodin came to Berlin and Dutta arranged his meeting with Chatto. Borodin told Chatto: "You form a committee in Berlin and start work and thus establish contact between India and the Communist International" (p. 268).

Indian Revolutionary Committee as proposed by Borodin was established in Berlin (p. 270).

During this period—end of 1920—beginning of 1921—Evelyn Roy came to Berlin from Moscow. Dutta arranged her meeting with Chattopadhyaya

and Birendranath Dasgupta (p. 275) Mrs Roy was saying Zinoviev had sanctioned passports for Chatto and Dutta and others to come to Moscow (p. 277) Dutta also arranged a meeting between Chatto and Rutgers, a leading Dutch communist prominent in Comintern leading circles then Herambalal Gupta had come from the USA with a report about differences among Indian revolutionaries there At that time Chatto said, "It is time we stop our factional quarrels and go to Moscow" (p. 275) Dutta also mentions that when Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow for the first time, i.e. in November 1920, Roy and Aban Mukherji were in Tashkent This is quite correct, because they left Moscow after the Second Congress of the CI some time in August or September 1920 for Tashkent and remained in that area till early summer when Roy returned to Moscow for the Third Congress.

Cecil Kaye in his *Communism in India* (1926)—a little before the passage we have quoted above—mentions that Chattopadhyaya contacted the Soviet leaders from Stockholm, proposing the formation of an Indian revolutionary committee to be helped by them. Later he mentions that Chatto went to Moscow in November 1920 and returned. In February 1921 he received an invitation from Moscow and he proceeded there with the other revolutionaries. So Scotland Yard which was keeping track of Indian revolutionaries abroad through its spies was in possession of a more or less correct account though a little later.

Who were in the delegation of Indian revolutionaries headed by Chattopadhyaya, Dutta and Khankhoje and when exactly did they go? Taking up the second question first, we can say that the delegation was in Moscow from March-April to June-July 1921. Dr Dutta says that they spent three months before they came to the final commission meetings (p. 287). According to Roy's *Memoirs*, "several Indian revolutionaries had arrived from Berlin as representatives of the defunct Indian Revolutionary Committee" (p. 478) when he reached Moscow from Tashkent. That was a couple of months before the Third Congress of the Comintern. Further on (p. 489) he says the delegation was living in the same Hotel Lux, where all the delegates to the Third Congress were staying; that was in June-July 1921. That fixes the dates as we have stated.

As to the composition of the delegation, Roy says: "The delegation... was composed of fourteen people, including Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutta, Birendranath Dasgupta, the Maharashtrian Khankhoje, Ghulam Ambia Khan Luhani, Nalini Gupta The driving force of the delegation however was Agnes Smedley, an American by birth" (p. 479). Dutta in his book (p. 278) mentions the same names. But he says, "all the members of the Indian Revolutionary Committee, organised as per suggestion of Borodin and Nalini Gupta—all those went to Moscow." Dutta says there they were joined by Abdul Rab Peshawari and M.P.B.T. Acharya. In the course of his narrative of the delegation and its doings in Moscow Dutta mentions, Barakatullah, Dr Hafiz and Dr Mansoor being there. He mentions that Pramathnath Dutt

(Daud Ali) was brought from Iran towards the end when the delegation was about to return. Perhaps Herambalal Gupta, who had returned from the USA to Berlin just when the delegation was about to proceed to Moscow, was also taken along but this is not clear. This means that the 14 Indian revolutionaries, barring M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji, could be the following -

(1) V Chattopadhyaya, (2) Bhupendranath Dutta, (3) P. S. Khankhoje, (4) Birendranath Dasgupta, (5) G A K Luhani, (6) Dr Mansoor*, (7) Dr Hafiz, (8) Herambalal Gupta, (9) Nalini Gupta, (10) Barakatullah, (11) Abdul Rab Peshawari, (12) M P B T Acharya, (13) Abdul Wahed, (14) Pramathnath (Daud Ali) Dutt.

Mahendra Pratap was not a part of this delegation, as he was at this time (first half of 1921) in Tashkent and later in the Pamirs. He came to Moscow in November 1921 or thereabout when he met M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji (cf references in RE and ML).

According to the account of the talks given by Dr Dutta, there seem to have been three-stages. The first stage was of waiting in which no commission was yet appointed to take up the talks with the Indian revolutionaries. In this stage they found that there were roughly two groups among them, so they all met together to solve the differences. But in the course of their meeting new squabbles came up. Chattopadhyaya charged Abani of being "a spy" and Abani simply accused the Indian revolutionaries who had come from Berlin as "German agents" (ARI, pp. 283-84).

The second stage began when a CI commission was appointed to take up the talks. This consisted of Borodin, Quelch and Rutgers, with the last named as chairman, and was to include all Indian revolutionaries as well. When the session of the commission began, Rutgers as chairman called upon Indian revolutionaries one by one to give their views. When Chattopadhyaya objected to this and said "I do not represent an individual but a group", Rutgers said, "We do not recognise any groups but will select individuals after discussion and start work." On this Chattopadhyaya threatened to boycott the commission and the deadlock so created was not solved. Later Rutgers is said to have reported to the CI that the Indians are unwilling to cooperate with the commission (ARI, p. 285).

Dr Dutta says that three months elapsed thereafter till the commission could resume its sitting again. This took place when Rakosi became the secretary in the place of Rutgers and the commission's meetings began under the chairmanship of James Bell, in this third and last

* Roy says, Mohammad Hasan Mansoor, who was chairman of the Berlin Committee in the first world war period, later declared himself to be a communist which isolated him from his colleagues. "He did not join them when they came to Moscow but later on he came there alone and lived quietly for a couple of years" (RM, p. 480).

stage three different theses came up for discussion presented by three groups (ARI, pp. 287-89).

One was by M. N. Roy, which, Dr Dutta says, he had earlier sent to the Comintern and was printed. Roy probably submitted a printed copy of the Supplementary Theses on the National and Colonial Question, which he had submitted to the Second Congress of the CI and was adopted by it with the substantial amendments made to it by Lenin. The two others were the one by Chattopadhyaya, Luhan and Khankhoje and another by Dr Bhupendranath Dutta and his group. Both these theses were sent to Lenin and he replied to both Dutta and Chattopadhyaya. Lenin's reply* to Dr Dutta has been reproduced by him (ARI, p. 290 and also in his *Dialectics of Land-Economics of India*) in its English text (reproduced in CW 45, p. 270). Lenin's letter to Chattopadhyaya is reproduced by him from memory and given in his autobiographical speech which we have given in 1917 documents in this book. What Dutta has quoted in his Bengali book (ARI, p. 290) is in substance the same.**

The commission which discussed these theses had the following composition: "The various Indian groups and on behalf of the International, James Bell (chairman), Borodin, Troyanovsky, Dr Thalheimer and as secretary of the commission, Rakosi, who was then also one of the secretaries of the ECCI" (ARI, p. 291). Dr Dutta gives the substance of the two theses. Chattopadhyaya's theses said that the priority task is the destruction of British imperialism and for this purpose the Third International should establish a "revolutionary board" which should be given assistance for its revolutionary work in India. Troyanovsky described it as a nationalist thesis. Dr Dutta's theses said that as long as the foreign enemy dominates, the various classes engaged in struggle against it should work together to organise the political revolution. He quoted from Marx's *Civil War in France* in this connection. He added "but the communist party must be organised from the beginning which after the political revolution will proceed to establish socialism in the country through a social revolution" (ARI, p. 290).

* Dear Comrade Dutta,

I have read your thesis. We should not discuss about social classes. I think we should abide by my thesis on colonial question. Gather statistical facts about peasant leagues if they exist in India.

Yours...
V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

** Dear Comrade Chattopadhyaya,

I have read your theses. I agree with you. British imperialism must be destroyed. When I can meet you, will be communicated to you by my secretary.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

P.S.: Please excuse my incorrect English.

According to Dr Dutta, the commission sat for two days in the course of which all the theses were read. As the commission was sponsored by the Communist International one should expect to find the texts of these in the archives of the CI. No effort has been made so far to get at the original texts which would be no doubt very interesting. The comments made on the different theses in the course of the discussion, given by Dr Dutta, shed a revealing light on their contents. For instance, the theses of Chattopadhyaya, Luhani and Khankhoje were said to be purely nationalist and ignoring its social aspect; but Khankhoje is reported to have said, "If you want to organise the communist party, do so, if you want to organise the working class movement do it." Then again when Dutta's theses were read, Borodin significantly asked: "Where is the difference between your and Roy's stand?" Dutta replied: "Roy does not want to cooperate with nationalists and for building a revolutionary movement in India where will you get people except among the nationalists?"

Roy rose to speak at the end. He said, "There has been a talk here of organising a new communist party, but one has been already organised, why not join it?" On this Dr Dutta says he submitted to the commission a written (typed) statement: "We are endeavouring to form an Indian party taking with us all those who have accepted communist ideology. We have sent such a message to the country (India) and work is being started. But if some people sitting in Moscow form a communist party without letting us know, we will not accept that nor cooperate with it in any way." Dr Dutta says that some days before the commission sat a news item appeared in a Moscow newspaper announcing that a CPI had been formed and it has been given affiliation to the CI. (This may have been some time in March or April 1921 when Roy returned from Tashkent.) Luhani, when he was reporting on their joint theses on the second day of the commission, said: "This party should be disaffiliated from the Comintern. A revolutionary board as proposed by them (i.e. by Chattopadhyaya, Khankhoje and Luhani) should be organised, that should be the agency through which the revolutionary movement in India should be helped" (ARI, pp 292-93).

The commission concluded. Dr Dutta reports two comments made thereafter which shed a significant light on the proceedings which so far had produced no result. Roy said to Nalini Gupta "It is a great challenge to me" (Quotation in English on p 293). Dr Thalheimer's ominous comment was: "In the middle of the nineteenth century in Germany all bourgeois-democrats posed themselves as social-democrats. The situation among the Indian revolutionaries in Moscow is exactly similar." Dr Dutta misunderstands the comment when he says that it was directed against Chattopadhyaya's group—meaning Thalheimer was calling Chattopadhyaya a social-democrat! What the German communist leader Thalheimer meant was: just as in Germany in the mid-19th century all bourgeois-democrats posed themselves as social-democrats so in Moscow now all national revolutionaries pose themselves as communists.

When we compare Roy's account of the visit of Indian revolutionary delegation to Moscow, we find certain differences and also confirmation of essential details. We also get his version as to why the talks did not succeed. Implicit in his narration is an underestimation of the significance of the visit of the Indian revolutionary delegation to Moscow and consequently a rejection of an alliance with noncommunist national revolutionaries in forming a broad anti-imperialist front for the national freedom struggle.

Firstly, Roy says Indian revolutionaries who came to Moscow as representatives of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin "which alone had the right to speak on behalf of India" (RM, p. 478) and then goes to show that "the delegation which came to Moscow was evidently not the original Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin" (p. 479). To prove this Roy makes two points. the old Berlin Committee was led by two stalwarts—one was Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and the other was Hardayal. In 1919 Hardayal left the revolutionary movement dis-covering new virtues in the British empire.* Secondly, Dr Mansoor, who was the chairman of the Berlin Committee, did not join the delegation. But according to Dr Dutta's account the delegation never made the claim that they were the original Berlin Committee. On the other hand they were the new committee which was formed at the suggestion of Borodin. They represented a strong trend in the old committee which had a general vague orientation towards socialism. For instance, Champakaraman Pillai, who was there in Berlin at the time, did not join the delegation. He later developed profascist tendencies. All this does not go against its representative character which even Roy does not challenge though he tries to minimise it.

Roy further says the delegation wanted to meet the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Chicherin. Now Chicherin "had just received the British note on the activities of Indian revolutionaries in Central Asia and naturally did not think that it would be very wise to receive well-known Indian revolutionaries in Moscow" (RM, p. 480). Chicherin however met them but they were disappointed with the meeting.

Then the delegation wanted to meet Lenin. According to Roy, Chattopadhyaya and others had prepared a long thesis "to contradict my thesis adopted by the Second World Congress of the Communist International" (RM, p. 482). Roy says that Lenin consulted him in the matter, but he told Lenin: "...he should see them and hear what they have to say... Lenin... said, 'Well, select three of them to come and see me.' I told him that I could not do that, he would have to contact them directly" (RM, p.481). "Finally, Chatto and Dutta (and most probably Khankhoje) were chosen by general consent (to meet Lenin). Having

* In a statement issued from Stockholm, Hardayal said, "I now believe that the consolidation of the British empire in the East is necessary in the interest of the people of India... in its worst forms it is a thousand times preferable to German and Japanese imperialism..."

given them a polite and patient hearing, Lenin advised the representatives of the Indian revolutionaries to see the secretary of the Communist International... The Indian revolutionary representatives returned from the coveted interview thoroughly disappointed and even angry" (RM, p. 482).

But the whole question is—Did such an interview take place at all? On this we are faced with conflicting evidence, both from the probable participants and others.

Of the three, Chattopadhyaya in his 1934 speech (see above) says: "We waited with great longing for our interview with Lenin. But our opponents had sabotaged this, and we returned with regret without having had the opportunity to speak to the leader."

Dr Dutta in the course of his detailed account of the delegation's four-month visit to Moscow never mentions it. However, after Hitler's attack on Soviet Union, he told one of the gatherings of the Calcutta Friends of the Soviet Union that he had met Lenin in 1921.

Soviet Indologist R. Yunitskaya in an article in *Asia and Africa Today* says: "V. I. Lenin's intention to talk with the Indian revolutionaries did not materialise . . .", since he "was ill at that time. He was allowed a month's leave due to illness... and on July 13 he went to Gorki to have rest." But this conclusion seems doubtful since Lenin left on 13 July after the Third Comintern Congress was over, while these events took place much before that. Lenin chronology for this period (CW 32, pp. 571-81) gives two instances of his going on leave: "January not later than 22: Lenin is on vacation and lives at Gorki" and "July 13: Lenin takes a month's holiday on the advice of his doctors and goes to Gorki." Thus it can be presumed that between 22 January and 13 July Lenin was available in Moscow.

Cecil Kaye in his *Communism in India* (1926) writes on the basis of reports of British spies, "Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow where he, according to his own statement, met Lenin, who said he was ready to help if Chattopadhyaya could present a mandate signed by the leading Indian revolutionaries and communists" and gives the date as May 1921.

L. Mitrokhin in a scientific paper—"The Story of a Search"—says he wrote to Dr P. S. Khankhoje at Nagpur on 3 October 1966 regarding his meeting with Lenin, and Khankhoje's secretary replied (since he was bedridden) ". . . he asked (me) to communicate that his talk with Lenin had left a tremendous impression..." To a further query Mitrokhin was informed on 24 January 1967: "Dr Khankhoje departed from this world only two days ago..." Some time later Khankhoje's Belgian wife met Mitrokhin and informed him that her husband had given an interview in 1966 to some Russian passing through Nagpur.

Mitrokhin traced him as Krashennikov of USSR embassy who gave the following information of his interview on 15 April 1966: "Immediately after the (Third Comintern) congress he was received by Lenin." But we know that Lenin left for Gorki after the Third CI Congress, and we do not know whether he met Lenin alone or with the delegation.

Thus there is confusion of dates and events and the question cannot be finally settled unless some positive confirmation can be got, e.g. from the diaries of that period maintained by Lenin's secretaries. Then, according to Roy, the delegation met Radek, the then secretary of the ECCI, after their alleged meeting with Lenin, and it is only thereafter that the commission was appointed by the CI for joint consultations with Indian revolutionaries. According to Dr Dutta the theses were prepared only after the commission was set up and then only the question of meeting (which however did not take place) Lenin came up. Dr Dutta's account seems to be more correct. It is corroborated by Chattopadhyaya, while Roy's account is garbled and incorrect, reflecting his subjective and slighting attitude towards the delegation. Again, according to Roy, the commission was appointed "to hear the Indian delegation and to investigate the whole situation" (RM, p. 483), while according to Dr Dutta the commission consisted of Indian revolutionaries and the representatives of the CI to jointly examine the whole question of helping Indian freedom movement. But perhaps this is not an important point.

Roy confirms that the commission appointed on behalf of the CI consisted of "August Thalheimer, the leader of the German Communist Party, Tom Quelch of the British Communist Party and Borodin" (RM, p. 483). He does not mention James Bell and Rakosi, who according to Dr Dutta were associated with the commission in its later phases. The issues at dispute, the failure to solve which led to the breakdown of the talks and to the temporary failure to bring about cooperation between the Indian revolutionaries abroad and the CI, as given by Roy, are identical with those mentioned by Dr Dutta. There is the question of suspicion about Abanindranath Mukherji expressed by Chattopadhyaya but that is relatively a minor point of difference which could have been settled to the satisfaction of Indian revolutionary delegation by an inquiry and clarification. But the main point was that the delegation "disapproved of the formation of the Indian Communist Party in Tashkent and demanded its dissolution as the condition for any cooperation with me" (RM, p. 485). It was not a question of Indian revolutionaries cooperating with Roy but with the Comintern Roy says, "Chattopadhyaya, on behalf of the delegation, gave an ultimatum to the commission. If their demands were not accepted, they would forthwith leave Moscow, fully convinced that Indian revolutionaries could not count on any help there" (RM, p. 485). Further on he says, "The ultimatum of the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was not accepted, and they all left Moscow soon afterwards" (RM, p. 489).

Roy does not mention the fact, which Dutta gives, namely that Indian revolutionaries suggested an alternative that an Indian Revolutionary Board be formed through which the CI should assist the Indian freedom movement. Indian revolutionaries were not in principle opposed to the formation of the CPI, to the organisation of the working class movement. Dr Dutta has quoted what Khankhoja said in the course of the com-

mission discussion. But Roy says he once "again explained the situation which was forced on me, and pleaded that the Communist Party of India was formed on the initiative of a number of others who would certainly not agree to the dissolution of the party, even if I recommended it. But the delegation was equally adamant also on the question" (RM, p. 485). It is intriguing, however, how a contraposition between a broad revolutionary board and the formation of a CPI came about; and if it did come up why could it not be solved by the joint efforts of Indian revolutionaries on the one hand and Roy and Abani and the CI representatives on the other? This should not have been difficult considering the fact that most of the revolutionaries had no opposition to the communist party as such but disapproved the particular manner of its formation.

Roy further makes the point that Indian revolutionaries were in Moscow and in the same hotel where most of the foreign delegates to the Third Congress of the CI were staying, they were daily contacting these delegates and briefing them on the "iniquities of the British rule in India". Roy says:

"All members of the Communist International, whether Russian or non-Russian, were against imperialism and sympathised with the struggle of the colonial peoples for freedom. The question they were interested in was how the liberation of the colonial peoples was to be brought about, and what sort of a regime would replace the colonial rule. The Indian revolutionaries had never thought of these questions and could not answer them" (RM, p. 489, emphasis added).

This is rather a sweeping statement to make. Earlier in the general introduction we have quoted the old Berlin Committee itself as going on record to state that their perspective after independence was achieved was of a "socialist republic" and wanted the Germans not to do anything against it by supporting any of the princes who might conspire against it with the help of the British. We have also quoted a very clear statement from Dr Dutta himself which implies the coexistence of a broad revolutionary consolidation and the formation of the Communist Party and their cooperation.

Chattopadhyaya roundly accuses Roy in his 1934 speech for the breakdown of the talks of 1921:

"Roy had surrounded himself with a net of adventurers and imperialist agents. Unfortunately he enjoyed then the confidence of the then leading comrades of the Comintern. We on our part began a determined struggle against the Roy clique. Roy had the support of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin and Radek. He became known through his colonial theses at the Second Congress (which were really formulated by Lenin). We had to leave Moscow after four months without being able to convince the comrades about the real character of Roy and his men. (Today Roy is in the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and we others are members of different parties.)"

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up by Chattopadhyaya. Firstly, he is saying these things in 1934, long after Roy is expelled from the Comintern in 1929 when he joined Thalheimer and Brandler, renegades from the Communist Party of Germany led by Thaelmann. Secondly, Chattopadhyaya's political outlook as reflected in this para was naturally the same as that of the documents of the Comintern and the Communist Party of India (Draft Platform of CPI—1930) after the Sixth World Congress of the CI. The documents described the Indian bourgeoisie roundly as counter-revolutionary. Thirdly, Chatto was not a member of the Party in 1921 but seems to have joined it in Germany some 3-4 years later. In the late twenties, Chattopadhyaya played an important role in organising the League against Imperialism, of which he became the secretary-general in February 1927, thus resolving the contraposition between the Revolutionary Board and the Communist Party, as the league had the full support of the CI and consequently of Roy who was then alternate member of the ECCI.

The conclusion therefore is that failure of the visit of Indian revolutionaries to Moscow in the summer of 1921 and of their joint consultation with the representative of the CI was not inevitable. It could have been prevented. Exact and correct apportioning of blame for the failure can be done only after the documents of the visit and talks preserved in the archives of the CI are studied.

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3. India at the Third Congress of the Comintern

The national and colonial question was not as such placed on the agenda and therefore it did not figure very much at the Third Congress (22 June-12 July 1921), though the situation there came up for comment indirectly in the theses on the world situation and the tasks and in the course of discussion on strategy and tactics. The congress opened on 22 June 1921 in Moscow with delegations from communist parties from 48 countries, from 28 youth associations and other proletarian organisations. In all there were 605 delegates from 103 organisations from 52 countries. We are not in a position to state whether India was one of these 52 countries or not. In the book *Third Congress of the Communist International Stenographic Report* (published in Russian from Petrograd by the USSR State Publications, 1922, pp 8-9), we have the statement, "Indian communist group to be invited, without vote." This was in course of a circular convening the congress. At the congress itself, according to this book, there were "4 delegates from India (Communist Party)" (p. 694). Information obtained from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Moscow, by Chinmohan Sehanobis tallies with this: "Four representatives from India participated in the Third Congress of the CI but only M. N. Roy's name is mentioned in the proceedings."

On the items on the agenda of the congress and Lenin's participation, we have the following:

"The congress discussed the world economic crisis and the new tasks of the Communist International; the report on the activity of the ECCI; the Communist Workers' Party of Germany; the Italian question; the tactics of the CI; the attitude of the Red International Council of Trade Unions to the CI; the struggle against the Amsterdam International; the

tactics of the RCP(B); the CI and the communist youth movement, the women's movement; the United Communist Party of Germany, etc.

"Lenin directed the preparations for and the activities of the congress; he was elected its honorary chairman; he took part in drafting all the key resolutions; he gave a report on the tactics of the RCP(B); he spoke in defence of the CI's tactics; on the Italian question; in the commissions and at the enlarged sittings of the ECCI, and at the delegates' meetings" (CW 32, p. 560).

The Third Congress took place at a time when the international situation was characterised by the fact that the situation in the capitalist countries remained objectively revolutionary but "the open revolutionary struggle of the proletariat for power is at the present moment slackening and slowing down in many countries" The theses of the congress stated: "The chief task of the communist party in the present crisis is to direct the defensive struggles of the proletariat, to broaden and deepen them, to link them together and, in harmony with the march of events, to transform them into decisive political struggles for the final goal" (CI-JD, p. 239)

Speaking at the congress, Lenin emphasised the need to study the concrete developments of the class struggles in the capitalist countries when the working class was already organised in mass trade unions. He said, "The more organised the proletariat is in a capitalistically developed country, the greater thoroughness does history demand of us in preparing for revolution, and the more thoroughly must we work to win over the majority of the working class" (CW 32, p. 481). He called for putting an end to the "left" illusions that the original stormy tempo of the world revolution continues uninterrupted, that a new revolutionary war has already begun and that the victory of the revolution depends exclusively on the will of the communist parties and their activities.

The Third Congress was meeting against the background of the victory of counter-revolution in Hungary (1919), of the failure of the "March Action" in Germany and the subsequent putting forward by the United German Communist Party of its famous "Open Letter" calling upon the Social-Democratic Party to join in an effort to build a broad united front of the working class to fight for the urgent demands of the workers and toiling people. The document of the congress on the tactics of the Comintern was formulated on the advice of Lenin and was based on the experience of the struggle in various countries and supported the line taken by the "Open Letter". It contained the abovementioned formulations of the new situation. At the congress there was a left-sectarian tendency, which came forward with amendments to the document on the tactics of the CI—amendments which supported the theory of going over to the "offensive" and for deleting everything that criticised the theory which demanded a deletion of the reference to the "Open Letter" and its line and which demanded a sharpening of the struggle against the centrists.

In the course of the discussion and in struggle against these "left"

amendments Lenin, supported by many outstanding leaders of the various parties, developed the basic principles of the new tactics of the CI for the new situation. Lenin pointed out that the theses on the tactics of the CI must lay down the basic line of the Comintern, which is especially necessary now that communists have not only formally condemned the centrists but also excluded them from the party. He reminded the delegates that "The slogan of the first and second congresses was 'Down with the Centrists!'" (CW 32, p. 474). By conducting a decisive struggle against the centrist leaders, the revolutionary-minded members of the centrist parties of Germany, France and in other countries were won over for the cause of the Comintern. Now we must go ahead. "Now we must deal with another aspect, which we also consider dangerous... we are confronted now by other, more important questions than that of attacks on the centrists... Instead, the comrades ought to learn to wage a real revolutionary struggle... we must not engage in empty word-spinning but must immediately begin to learn, on the basis of the mistakes made, how to organise the struggle better" (CW 32, p. 477). Coming out sharply against those who attacked the "Open Letter" as opportunist, he said, "In Europe, where almost all the proletarians are organised, we must win the majority of the working class and anyone who fails to understand this is lost to the communist movement" (CW 32, p. 470).

Explaining the miracle of how a small Bolshevik Party won in Russia, Lenin said, "In Russia we were a small party, but we had with us in addition the majority of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country. Do you have anything of the sort? We had with us almost half the army, which then numbered at least 10 million men. Do you really have the majority of the army behind you? Show me such a country!" (CW 32, p. 471). "If it is said that we were victorious in Russia in spite of not having a big party, that only proves that those who say it have not understood the Russian revolution and that they have absolutely no understanding of how to prepare for a revolution" (CW 32, p. 474).

Lenin not only exposed the mistakes of the "left" tendency at the congress but won over the comrades representing the same so that the congress adopted the theses on tactics unanimously. The most important tasks of the communist parties defined in these theses are: "...to win predominating influence over the majority of the working class, and to bring its decisive strata into the struggle... participation in the struggle of the working masses, the direction of this struggle in communist spirit, and the creation in the course of this struggle of experienced, large, revolutionary mass communist parties."

The congress decisively rejected the "theory of going over to the offensive" and emphasised that "The attempts of impatient and politically inexperienced revolutionary elements to resort to the most extreme methods, which by their very nature imply the decisive revolutionary uprising of the proletariat, for particular problems and tasks... contain

elements of the most dangerous adventurism and may, if they are employed, frustrate for a long time the genuinely revolutionary preparation of the proletariat for the seizure of power" (CIJD, p. 246).

Basing itself on the experiences of the working class in different countries and on the example of the "Open Letter" of the United Communist Party of Germany, the Third Congress drew the conclusion that all sections and organisations of the working class must be drawn in the joint struggle for their urgent daily demands. The congress called upon communists to increase their influence in the trade unions, to bring pressure on parties which base themselves on the working class masses, and to strive to unfold the joint struggle for the immediate demands of the working class.

An official history of the CI sums up the work of the Third Congress on the new tactics as having led the communist parties to lay the foundation stone of a new stage in the international communist movement—the stage of the struggle to create a proletarian united front. At the same time this congress placed before the communist parties the task of winning over to the side of the proletariat, semiproletarian and petty-bourgeois sections of the people, above all the small peasantry, other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, i.e. employees and the intelligentsia, so that a broad general democratic front against the offensive of capital is built up. In a letter that Lenin addressed in these days to the United Communist Party of Germany on the significance of the decisions of the Third Congress, he quoted that section of the theses on tactic which charged the Italian Communist Party with the task of uniting all the organisations of the working class in the struggle against fascism and building the united front, and not to make it a precondition that the ordinary members of the reformist organisations first break with their leaderships.

Though the question of the national liberation struggle of countries oppressed and enslaved by imperialism was not specifically placed on the agenda, it could not be left out in analysing the contemporary world situation and in defending the perspectives of the tasks of the revolutionary movement.

In his report on the tactic of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) Lenin defined the three main forces of the international revolutionary movement: the country of the victorious proletariat, the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries and the liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples. Appraising the revolutionary movement as an active revolutionary factor, he said, "in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism" (CW 32, p. 482).

In the theses on the world situation and the tasks of the Comintern adopted at the Third Congress, we have this paragraph on the national liberation movement and on the situation in India and China:

"The vigorous development of capitalism in the East, particularly in

India and China, has created new social bases there for the revolutionary struggle. The bourgeoisie of these countries tightened their bonds with foreign capital, and so became an important instrument of its rule. Their struggle against foreign imperialism, the struggle of a very weak rival, is essentially half-hearted and feeble in character. The growth of the indigenous proletariat paralyses the national revolutionary tendencies of the capitalist bourgeoisie, but at the same time the vast peasant masses are finding revolutionary leaders in the person of the conscious communist vanguard. The combination of military oppression by foreign imperialism, of capitalist exploitation by the native and the foreign bourgeoisie, and the survival of feudal servitude creates favourable conditions for the young proletariat of the colonies to develop rapidly and to take its place at the head of the revolutionary peasant movement. The popular revolutionary movement in India and in other colonies has now become an integral part of the world revolution as the uprising of the proletariat in the capitalist countries of the Old and New World" (CI-JD, p. 234).

On the closing day of the congress in the twenty-fourth sitting on 12 July 1921 M. N. Roy made a short protest against the noninclusion of the eastern question in the agenda of the congress. The following is text of Roy's speech:

"I have been given five minutes* for my report. As my theme cannot be exhausted even in an hour, I will make use of these five minutes to give a short resume of my idea and to protest.

"The method by which the eastern question is being discussed in this congress—(is) purely opportunistic and more worthy of the programme of the Second International. There is not even the slightest possibility of arriving at any conclusions from the few words which the delegates from the eastern countries have been allowed to speak here.

"I protest against their method of discussing the eastern question. It was put on the agenda of the congress at a session of the Executive Committee. But during the whole sittings of the congress, no attention whatsoever was devoted to this question. Finally only yesterday the commission met in the first session. But it was a pitiable sight. Not even a single representative of European or American countries was present. This commission constituted according to the general opinion,

* "...he (Tom Mann) had been asked to make a report on the eastern question .. Tom got going in fine style, but with his customary eloquence he spoke longer than the time allotted to him. The result was a decision by the president to limit the other speakers in discussion to five minutes each. The Indian leader and other delegates from colonial countries protested vigorously and refused to speak unless they were given ample time. What threatened to be an incident was smoothed out by a tactful compromise in favour of the colonial delegates" (Thomas Bell, *Pioneering Days*, London, 1941, p. 239).

in accordance with the established rule of the congress, decided that on this question there would be no theoretical resolution. But such a decision is not correct and it is proper to change it. Therefore, I call upon the congress to entrust the eastern question once again to a properly constituted commission and consider it with all the seriousness it merits" (Third Congress of the Communist International, Stenographic Report, Russian, p. 472).

S. A. Dange's "Gandhi vs Lenin"

While the postwar revolutionary upsurge was receding in western Europe in 1921 it was gathering new momentum in India in the context of the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress endorsing Gandhiji's plan to launch a noncooperation movement to redress the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and to win swaraj. The year 1921 marks India's entry into a new and mass phase of its independence movement. In September 1920 the Calcutta special session had already adopted Gandhiji's policy of progressive nonviolent noncooperation starting with boycott of schools, colleges and law courts and later leading to nonpayment of taxes. The Nagpur session held at the end of December 1920 finally adopted this noncooperation programme. The creed of the Congress was changed from the aim of colonial self-government to be attained by constitutional means to "the attainment of swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means". In 1921 itself Gandhiji defined swaraj as "complete control over the revenues of India and over the taxing power without the interference of a foreign power". This was in essence a negation of the colonial status and contained in it the seeds of development towards the demand for complete independence. The Nagpur session also gave a new shape to the organisation of the National Congress with a vast number of wholtime workers, organising a countrywide network of congress committees reaching down to the villages, and with an all-India leadership functioning through the All-India Congress Committee and with a Working Committee of 15 guiding the movement through frequent meetings.

R. P. Dutt in his *India Today* has correctly summed up the significance of these decisions taken at Nagpur at the end of the year 1920:

"The new programme and policy inaugurated by Gandhi marked a giant's advance for the National Congress. The Congress now stood out as a political party leading the masses in struggle against the government for the realisation of national freedom. From this point the National Congress won its position (a position at which the militant nationalists of the earlier years would have rubbed their eyes) as the central focus of the national movement" (IT, p. 341).

But the movement was to be strictly nonviolent. Gandhiji's idea was to develop the movement step by step, so that it assumes an ever growing mass character on an all-India plane but is at the same time strictly controlled and remains nonviolent. The movement was proceeding under the galvanising slogan of "Swaraj in One Year" and under a scathing exposure and denunciation of the "satanic" repressive policy of the British government and of a call to assert the right to freedom of speech, press and association. This exposure of the repressive policy of the government by Gandhiji was later summed up in the well known pithy slogan "The satanic government that cannot be mended must be ended!"

Already the development of the noncooperation movement in 1921 brings to the fore the contradiction between the objective manner in which the masses act under the impact of the political slogans and call of movement, and the subjective desire and actions of Gandhiji and the Congress leadership to control the same. It was this contradiction which later in 1922 culminated in the famous Bardoli Resolution formulated by Gandhiji and adopted by the Congress Working Committee, when at Chauri Chaura in UP a mass of peasants, infuriated by repression, attacked and burnt down a police chawl. This is the basic contradiction of the methodology and ideology of the nonviolent noncooperation movement—which we later understood in terms of the dual role of the national bourgeoisie in the independence struggle. The struggle to understand this contradiction and to use the understanding to evolve a correct revolutionary policy in the independence struggle runs like a red thread through the history of the CPI from its very beginning right to the attainment of independence and even afterwards.

Thus the developments of 1921 can be grouped into two series: (1) events and developments belonging strictly to the noncooperation movement and (2) spontaneous uprisings and movement of workers, peasants and of masses in general not strictly part of the noncooperation programme but all the same taking place under its strong nation-embracing impact.

The noncooperation movement begins in January 1921 with the appeal of Deshbandhu C. R. Das to the students to boycott schools and colleges and to lawyers to boycott courts. It breathed the spirit of boycott of the entire British administration. The boycott of schools and colleges was eminently successful releasing a vast student mass all over the country to supply live-wire workers to the spreading mass movement. The boycott of courts was not so successful, though the example of eminent lawyers like Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and others leaving their lucrative

practice to don the knagslivery of the noncooperation struggle had an electrifying effect.

The AICC meeting on 1 April in Vijayawada stressed that time was not yet ripe for taking up no-tax campaign and a general civil disobedience movement and advised that there should be no violation of section 144 banning meetings etc wherever it is imposed. This was probably in response to the remarkable local struggle of the peasants of Chirala—a village in Andhra Pradesh. Here the peasants were protesting against the order making their village into a municipality, which meant new taxes, by a movement of mass migration from the village.

The AICC met again on 28-30 July 1921 in Bombay and initiated a programme concentrating on swadeshi, khadi and charkha and on a complete boycott of foreign cloth to be completed by September 1921 as a necessary preparation for the next stage of the movement. The session at the same time resolved that civil disobedience movement should be postponed till this programme was completed. It however reiterated its faith in the principle of civil disobedience, recognising that it was the inherent right of the citizen to sever his connection with the government which has forfeited the confidence of the vast majority of the population of India.

Mistaking the preparatory measures of the leadership as temporising, the government announced the Indian visit and tour of the Prince of Wales to take place in November 1921. This was an attempt to test the strength of the movement. The AICC immediately reacted to this by announcing a complete boycott of all functions organised in connection with the prince's visit. Later on 5 October, the Working Committee meeting in Bombay, while yet reiterating that a general civil disobedience movement would not be possible till the boycott of foreign cloth was complete, took the decision to organise an all-India hartal on the day of the arrival of the Prince of Wales and to boycott receptions to him at all places.

The all-India hartal on 17 November—the day of the arrival of the Prince of Wales—was an unprecedentedly successful demonstration of India's massive disaffection against oppressive British rule. In Bombay the hartal was accompanied by a spontaneous general strike of the textile workers. There were retaliatory actions by the masses against police repression, such as burning of tram cars, liquor shops, etc. There were cases of molesting of some Parsis and Christians who did not participate in the hartal. But in the main the retaliatory actions of the masses were directed against the British government. In Calcutta the city life was paralysed by the hartal and the pro-British papers like the *Statesman* stated that Calcutta was practically taken over by National Volunteers for the day. From that day onwards towards the end of the year and the beginning of the next the movement rose to new heights. The Prince of Wales was "greeted" with massive hartals wherever he went. The spirit of noncooperation with the British government revived and organised the masses through the length and breadth of the

the gurdwara as soon as the jatha entered and his minions opened fire on them murdering 200 Sikhs in cold blood. The mahants in their selfish fight against the Sikh masses led by the Prabandhak Committee relied on the support of the British government and also on that of the Sikh princes like those of Patiala, Kapurthala and Faridkot. But Nankana mahant had overstepped all bounds and his dastardly monstrous crime sparked off a mighty uprising of Sikh masses later known as the Akali movement which went on for years and did not stop until all gurdwaras came under the democratic administration of the prabandhak committees. Though it was a movement and a struggle for a religious reform demand, battlelines in it were drawn as in the noncooperation movement: the British government and the loyalist feudals supporting the mahants on one side and Sikh masses mostly peasants and their Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee on the other. The majority of the leaders in the Prabandhak Committee were the supporters of noncooperation. The movement brought the Sikh peasant masses into the mainstream of the national freedom movement. The Akali Party with its narrow communal outlook was not known then—it was its later degeneration. The movement was considered a part of the noncooperation movement and its militant part. Gandhiji gave a sign of relief when the militant Sikhs adopted nonviolence for their movement, while the British rulers trembled in their shoes when they saw the main base for recruiting for the army being swept into the fold of the national freedom struggle.

The Eka movement of the peasants of big landlord-ridden Uttar Pradesh was widespread and militant. The peasant speakers in their meeting called for killing of district magistrates and driving out of the British. Their demands were—fixed rents, receipts for payment, stopping of all begar (forced labour) for the landlords, free use of water from ponds and freedom to graze cattle in the jungles. It was a revolt of the peasant tenants against unbearably oppressive group of the landlords though not yet for abolition of landlordism. The British promulgated the Rent Act for Oudh in 1921 granting permanent occupancy rights to a small section but it did not touch even the fringe of the problem and the movement spread further.

The Moplah rebellion, which was essentially an uprising of peasant tenants of Malabar against the oppression by the jenmis and British government, began on 20 August 1921. The peasant tenants were Muslim while the jenmis were Hindu and so the struggle inevitably took communal colour, which the contemporary British official press sought to overemphasise by deliberately publishing stray cases of forcible conversion etc. It is true that the rebels raised the slogan of setting up of a "Khilafat kingdom", but it should also be noted that the movement started with the formation of a Khilafat Committee and under the impact of the antigovernment message of the noncooperation movement with Hindu Muslim unity as its main slogan. The main targets of the attack by the rebels were the police, military, landlords and moneylenders. The police and military suppressed the rebellion with brutal violence in which

3,268 Moplahs were killed. The monstrous callousness of the repression was demonstrated when on 19 November 100 Moplah prisoners were forced into a closed goodswagon for transport from Calicut to Madras, out of whom 70 were found to have died due to thirst and suffocation when the wagon was opened at Podanur station. The Congress condemned the repression against the Moplahs but it also condemned the Moplah violence though it added that "the provocation beyond endurance was given to the Moplahs and that the reports published by and on behalf of the government have given a onesided and highly exaggerated account of the wrongs done by the Moplahs and an understatement of the needless destruction of life resorted to by the government in the name of peace and order" (*India's Struggle for Freedom*, Hiren Mukerjee, pp. 149-50).

For the strike wave of 1921 we have the following statistics for the whole of India: 396 strikes, 6,00,351 workmen involved and 69,94,426 workdays lost. Taking the loss of number of workdays as a fair measure of the intensity of the strike wave and comparing similar figures for the next 30 years or so up to the attainment of independence, we find that intensity for the year 1921 was over half the intensity recorded for the average peak of the crisis years such as 1925, 1928-29, 1937-38 and 1946-47. The workers who were drawn into the strike actions of 1921 were from textile and jute mills of Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad and Madras; North Western and East Bengal Railways, coalfield of Jharia; Post and Telegraph of Bombay; plantations of Assam; tramways of Calcutta, apart from others. The economic demands of these strike actions were mostly for raising pay scales and wages due to the rising prices, for recognition of unions, but there were also sympathetic and political strikes.

Plantation workers of Assam striking against retrenchment started a big exodus in May 1921 to their different provinces. This was in the face of unbearable police repression. They demanded to be repatriated to their respective home provinces, and when this was denied they began travelling by railway trains in huge crowds. One such crowd was detained at Chandpur and was attacked by the police. The EB Railway workers of Chandpur staged a remarkable protest strike in sympathy with the plantation workers.

60,000 mill workers of Bombay staged a brief protest strike on the first death anniversary of Lokamanya Tilak on 1 August 1921. Jharia coalfield workers who were extensively on strike in the beginning of 1921 were again on strike in November when a large number of them attended the AITUC session of Jharia and some of them related from the platform their grievances. This was at index of their growing political consciousness.

The highest indication of the rising political consciousness of the working class was seen when they backed the call for hartal to proclaim India's boycott of Prince of Wales's visit on 17 November 1921 by complete general strikes in the industrial towns like Bombay,

Calcutta and Madras. "This was perhaps the first all-national political general strike in India. In Bombay, where Prince of Wales landed, besides the general strike, barricades were raised to fight the police, the territorial army and the regular soldiery that were sent to quell the strike and uprising. The strike and fighting lasted from 17 to 21 November 1921. The *Daily Herald*, the Labour paper in England, called it the 'strongest uprising'. During the struggle, the official estimate is that 30 people were shot dead in Bombay alone" (AITUC—Fifty Years, Vol. I, p. 104)

We have recounted these events separately but they formed an inseparable part of the developing tempo of the first noncooperation movement though they were not a part of its programme. They reflect the spontaneous reaction of the struggling peasants and workers to the militant calls and slogans of the noncooperation movement, viz "Swaraj in One Year" and "End the Satanic Government". They brought out the contradiction between the slogan of "nonviolence" with which Gandhiji and Congress leadership sought to restrict the movement into the confines of a preconceived programme of action and the objective response of the struggling masses to the other militant slogans of the noncooperation movement. This contradiction made a deep impression on the minds of those young leftwing revolutionaries who in those early postwar days drew their inspiration from the wartime activities of the national revolutionaries but who were now drawn into the fold of the surging mass struggles of the noncooperation movement.

Thus arose from their ranks a criticism of Gandhian ideology and methodology of struggle as well as of the political programme of the movement. This criticism was from the left and revolutionary side as distinct from the criticism of nonviolence of Gandhian policy and programme in general which came from the liberals and moderates who opposed the mass struggle. It is significant to note that these leftwing critics of Gandhiji's nonviolent programme and policy of struggle did not back the individual terrorism or the conspiratorial activities in the army of the national revolutionaries of the war period. Most of them were attracted by the greatest event of contemporary history, viz the great socialist revolution in Russia and by the ideology and practice of the Bolshevik Party and its leader Lenin. This is natural. The revolutionary mass upheaval of the first noncooperation movement was a part of the worldwide mass revolutionary upheaval which was heralded by the victory of the workers' and peasants' revolution in Russia in November 1917. Despite the efforts of the British government to cordon off India through censorship and customs regulations, despite its rabid anti-Bolshevik propaganda blared through the official and loyalist press, the truth about the Russian revolution and the teachings of Lenin could not be withheld from the Indian masses and their political movement.

The nationalist press of those days and several nationalist leaders came out against the official anti-Bolshevik propaganda and hailed the

Russian revolution as a great historical event—a milestone of human progress which cannot but have a favourable impact on our independence struggle. In 1920 the scribes of the British-Indian Home Department were lamenting that their censorship and customs regulations banning entry into India of the publications of the Communist International, communist parties and allied labour organisations had failed, that their anti-Bolshevik propaganda featuring imagined atrocities of the "red regime" was falling flat. Indian journalists, writers and political leaders of India were picking up the truth about the Russian revolution, about the thought and work of the Soviet government of workers and peasants from such sources as *London Times*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Daily Herald* (Labour) and from a number of books and pamphlets by noncommunist progressive writers which all could not be stopped and the official British-Indian government propaganda was being effectively exposed.

Recently a number of well documented books have appeared, which describe how the Russian revolution and the life, thought and work of Lenin were reflected in the journals, books and utterances of the Indian political leaders in the closing years of the second decade and in the early twenties.* It is not necessary to quote from any of these books, but it can be stated that P. C. Joshi's essay "Lenin—Contemporary Indian Image—A Documentary" contains the most exhaustive and excellent collection.

We will only give here a list of books on Lenin and the Russian revolution which appeared in 1921 or thereabout, i.e. at the same time as S. A. Dange's *Gandhi vs Lenin*: (1) *Nicolai Lenin: His Life and Work* by G. V. Krishna Rao (English, Ganesh & Co, Madras, 1921), (2) *Bolshevik Jadugar (Lenin)* by Ramashankar Awasthi (Hindi, Calcutta, 1921), (3) *Socialism* by Vinayak Sitaram Sarawate (Marathi, Dabholkar, Poona, 1921), (4) *Russialil Bolshevism* by Dr Laxman Narayan Joshi, (Marathi, Poona, 1921), (5) *Nicolai Lenin* by R. G. Bhide (Marathi, Bombay, 1922), (6) *Lenin and the Russian Revolution* by Aziz Bhopali (Urdu, Lahore, 1922), (7) *The Liberator of the Poor in Russia—Nicolai Lenin* by Gorakh (Kannada, Hubli, 1923), (8) *Biplab Pathe Russlar Rupantar* by Amul Chandra Sen (Bengali, 1924).

Thus by 1921 Indian political opinion was being fairly correctly informed of the truth about the Russian revolution and about the life and work of Lenin and other leaders of the Bolshevik Party. This gave a new orientation to the criticism of Gandhiji's ideology, and the method and programme of the noncooperation movement which the leftwing revolutionaries were making in the light of the experience of

* (1) S. C. Sardesai, *India and Russian Revolution*, (New Delhi, 1967), (2) P. C. Joshi and others, *"Lenin and the Contemporary Indian Press"*, (Delhi, 1970), (3) Devendra Kaushik and Leonid Mitrokhin, *Lenin, His Image in India* (Delhi, 1970), (4) Gautam Chattopadhyay, *Communism and Bengal's Freedom Movement* (Delhi, 1971).

the great mass struggles it had unleashed. Already these early Indian writings on the Russian revolution were clear as to its basic achievements and its opening a new epoch.

The "Bolshevik Revolution in Russia", as it was called in those days in India, not only took Russia out of the war but came out with an initiative for peace, which its leaders proclaimed must be based on self-determination of nations, on no annexations and the end of imperialism. It carried forward the overthrow of tsarism achieved by the first revolution, by abolishing landlordism, by giving land to the tiller and by calling upon the peasant committees to carry out the distribution of land to the peasants. It established democracy for the working people by giving power into the hands of a government of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Soviets. It was a dictatorship of the proletariat—an alliance of workers, peasants and the exploited classes wielding state power to smash the resistance of the old exploiting classes seeking to restore the old order. This government proceeded immediately by taking over banks, largescale machine industry, means of transport and communication to end capitalism and build the new social order of socialism for which Lenin, as the head of the new state, gave a ringing call. Soon afterwards a workers' and peasants' revolutionary army was created to defend the revolution and crush the efforts of the capitalists and landlords to stage a counter-revolution with the active aid of the British and other imperialists.

That the intelligent, forward-looking political elements in India understood these achievements and their significance for India's freedom struggle which had entered a new stage after 1919 and especially after the launching of the first noncooperation movement is clear from these contemporary writings on the Russian revolution and on Lenin and his work and teachings. For instance Ramkrishna Gopal Bhide, the author of *Nicolai Lenin (the founder of the Russian democracy)* recalls:

"Those were the heydays of British imperialism and we Indians had to gather inspiration in our struggle for freedom from every source—and what source could be better than Lenin and his Bolshevik Russia? But these sources were in those days unknown to the general public, hence somewhat mysterious and for that reason even more attractive to us. Lenin's, we felt, was an entirely new experiment in revolution, which had a great appeal to our mind imbued with our ancient philosophy."

Bhide was working in Kesari office in Poona and he says Senapati Bapat, who was then acting as editor of *Maratha* (the English weekly of Kesari group), helped him greatly by supplying him materials and documents for writing the book. *Kesari* itself on 21 August 1920 wrote the following in its article "Moral Victory of Lenin":

"The 6th and 7th of November 1917 will be historically memorable dates, for during these two days the Russian revolution took place without shedding a drop of blood. Of course the efforts of thousands of persons for years were instrumental in bringing it about, but every big

idea requires someone as its embodiment. Lenin's name will live forever in the history of communism" ("Report on Newspapers Published in Bombay Presidency", No. 34, 1920, pp. 28-29—National Archives of India).

Kesari was writing in the spirit of its founder Lokamanya Tilak who was no more then but who had stated in 1919 while in London that the Bolshevik revolution was bound to be a favourable factor in our struggle for swaraj (Scotland Yard report on Tilak, in London). But the people of the Kesari circle, who wrote all this about the Russian revolution and Lenin, did not go any further. As is well known after the death of Tilak some of them took the path of responsive cooperation. The militant admirers and followers of Tilak joined the ranks of Gandhiji's first noncooperation movement. Leftwing revolutionaries among them, like Dange, who were already becoming critical of Gandhiji's ideology and method of struggle, were profoundly influenced by the impact of the Russian revolution and thought of Lenin to give a new orientation to their critique of Gandhism.

Dange's book *Gandhi vs Lenin* written in April 1921 and published towards the middle of the year has on the one hand to be classed among the books published in India in the early twenties giving information about the achievements of the Russian revolution and about the thought of Lenin. On the other hand it goes far ahead of any of the contemporary books on the subject in as much as it gives expression to the new orientation of the critique of Gandhism, which despite its inevitable shortcomings and immaturity contained the seeds of an alternative path and programme for India's independence struggle.

Dange himself says that a group came into existence in Bombay round his *Gandhi vs Lenin*. That was one of the earlier beginnings of a communist group in India. Dr Vaman D. Sathaye in his reminiscences of Dange's early life writes this about the activities of this group:

"After some time he took charge of the Marathi daily *Induprakash* as joint editor with the well known journalist, Achyut Balwant Kolhatkar. Under Dange's guidance the paper changed its character. It began to publish for the first time news of the workers' struggle and articles on socialism. I contributed a series of articles on the life of Lenin to that paper. Probably this was one of the earliest attempts or the first to publish a detailed life of Lenin in any Indian language. The series appeared in the paper from 14 November 1921 to 1 March 1922."

"In 1921, we contested the elections of the Girgaum District Congress Committee and the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. We were successful in the elections and for two years I was the secretary of the Girgaum District Congress Committee. Our group was elected

*The articles giving the life of Lenin in Marathi were published in *Induprakash* (Bombay) on the following dates: 1921—14, 16, 26 November, 7, 17, 20, 25 December; 1922—17, 18 January, 2, 4, 5 February and 1 March.

on the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and had also a seat in the All-India Congress Committee and it was mainly through our efforts that the system of proportional representation adopted by the Congress at Nagpur was worked out in the election of the Bombay provincial and district Congress committees" (Article on the 60th Birthday of S. A. Dange).

Dange writes about this group as follows :

"This party (i.e. the CPI formed in Tashkent) tried to establish links with those communist groups which had already begun their work in India from 1920 onwards. Of these the Bombay group had come into existence on the basis of the book, *Gandhi vs Lenin*, which I had written and published in March 1921. I had also organised and started the publication of an English weekly paper called *The Socialist* from August 1922" (When Communist Differ, Bombay, 1970, p. 37-38).

We are reproducing extracts from his book and another extract from an article by Dange written in 1964 in which he gives the background in which he wrote the book and his evaluation of the same. We are also reproducing an extract from his statement in the Meerut Conspiracy Case made in 1931 in which he gives his estimation of the book then

In conclusion we would point to some of the significant features of the book which stand out even today despite its inevitable shortcomings and immaturity. First thing to note is that this is the first independent attempt of a leftwing revolutionary in India to apply the ideas of the socialist revolution in Russia and the thought of Marx and Lenin to the problem of India's struggle for independence. The early communist groups in process of formation in India in 1920-21, i.e. Dange's in Bombay, of Muzaffar Ahmad and Kazi Nazrul Islam in Calcutta and M. Singaravelu's in Madras were neither in touch with each other nor were they yet contacted by the Communist International or M. N. Roy. In Lahore, the early communist group was formed only after the first Muhajirs returned, i.e. in 1922 when *Inqilab* was started.

Muzaffar Ahmad writes that at the end of 1921 (November) books like Lenin's *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?* and "*Left-wing*" *Communism and People's Marx* (an abridged popular edition of *Capital*) were secretly available through bookshops; but he too had no contact or information about the Communist International till Nalini Gupta met him in January 1922 and even Nalini could not give him cogent information about the Comintern (MCPI, pp 81 and 87). The first document of M. N. Roy to reach India was the manifesto to the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress (December 1921) brought by Nalini Gupta and also probably posted to different addresses. Home Department papers in the National Archives report about a communication being brought by a German sailor for the Jharia session of the AITUC (December beginning, 1921), which was intercepted.

It can therefore be safely asserted that Dange, when he wrote his book in the beginning of 1921, was not yet contacted by the Comintern

or Roy and had to get his information from other sources and make his independent assessment and application.

In the foreword to the book Dange writes

"However my purpose will be served, if the booklet gives at least an idea of the elementary principles of the great movement in Russia and of the hypocrisy of those, who would class NCO with Bolshevism, if my countrymen come to recognise the magnitude of extremism to which we will have to go in our struggle for emancipation and to expect and be ready for government terrorism, a veritable greater Ireland on the Indian soil!" (p. iii).

Here Dange clearly visualises that our struggle for emancipation will have to go far beyond the limits set by the noncooperation movement.

Secondly, in posing the problem he proceeds to find out how Gandhism and Bolshevism propose to solve two problems facing us, viz "How to throw off the foreign yoke? With what methods? And then how to destroy evil of capitalism amongst us which is making fast progress and will double its speed when we are politically free." He then proceeds "to compare and contrast these two systems of philosophy and action and try to see their efficiency to arrive at the desired result" (p. 22). We have quoted the relevant extract from chapter III of *Gandhi vs Lenin* where this comparison and contrast is brought out in a tabular form.

Thirdly, in his chapter on the "Armed Blow" in which he gives a brief account of the events of the Russian revolution, he quotes from Lenin's Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions put before the Second Congress of the Communist International. Though in the source from which Dange quotes at the time the translation is different, the sense is identical, viz thesis Nos 5 and 6 in the famous Draft Theses.*

Fourthly, he poses the question as to how the terrorism of the imperialist government against the national freedom movement in the form of noncooperation and no-tax movement is to be paralysed and gives the correct answer, viz through the education, organisation and uprising of labour and peasantry:

"... There is one remedy. The terrorism will be paralysed by only one thing.. If at the extreme moment the Indian labour refuses to work in a solid mass, if the railwaymen, telegraph men, coolies and all sorts of labourers refuse to cooperate with the government, i.e. arrange what is called a sabotage, our success will be assured. So side by side with the education of the peasantry must be done the work of organising our labour and educating it. The labour organisation and education is a more hopeful task; because the labourers always are found in large town-areas and in enormous units; a fermenting political atmosphere prevails in such large cities, which makes them susceptible to rapid

* *Inprecor* in English which started publication only at the end of 1921 was not available then.

changes, while the nature of their work makes them habituated to concerted action. This characteristic makes us confident to say that an organised Indian labour will not fail us at the time of action; it is our dire necessity. If we win, we will win only by the help of the proletariat i.e. the labourers and peasantry" (Gandhi vs Lenin, pp. 57-58).

Despite a sectarian underestimation of the role of the middle class and a concession to Gandhian nonviolence, which may even be tactical (especially the rejection of the "armed blow"), the fruitful idea put forward here is the combination of the noncooperation movement with the organisation of workers and peasants leading to workers' general strike and peasants' uprising in order to overthrow imperialist rule.

Fifthly, Dange tries to put forward proposals as to how under swaraj the problem of labour vs capital and the agricultural problem will be solved. For this he proposes firstly, "that the great concerns like railway, mines and vast factory plants may be nationalised or controlled by state". Secondly, to prevent accumulation of capital in the hands of a few he proposes some sort of ceiling on individual incomes. Thirdly, to solve "the agricultural problem" he proposes "the breaking up of large estates and the promotion of small holdings schemes by the state". He adds, "It is by the break up of large estates and conversion of a landless, oppressed, indebted and impoverished tenantry into a thrifty, free and flourishing class of peasant proprietors owning land in small and medium sized farms in conjunction with the organisation of rural credit that we can hold and keep agricultural India in peace and prosperity" (ibid., pp. 59-61).

Here we have the first hesitant step being taken to evolve the programme of our independence movement conceived as an anti-imperialist, antifeudal revolution but it is mainly economic. Ideas are yet unclear and a charter of democratic rights of the workers, peasants and the common people is not included in this programme.

Sixthly, Dange in this book tries to understand the basic principles of communism—which he calls "extremist Marxism". He identifies the basic principles of philosophy, economic and political science of communism as "economic materialism, surplus value and class-war". He seems to have made a cursory acquaintance with Karl Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I, from which he quotes in one place (p. 17) and some writings on the Russian revolution.

tion movement with its creed of nonviolence had posed before leftwing revolutionaries in 1921.

The great merit of this book is that it is a pioneering effort at criticism of Gandhism, of its method of struggle and to forecast in the light of the experience of the Russian revolution and the teachings of Lenin, some of the essential features of communist proposals for the policy and programme for India's independence struggle. Muzaffar Ahmad wrote about this book as follows: "He (Dange) had also joined the noncooperation movement but finding himself in disagreement with Gandhism, wrote a book called *Gandhi vs Lenin* in English as far back as 1921. In those days it required considerable courage to write such a book" (*Communist Party of India—Years of Formation, 1921-1933*, Calcutta, p 10).

There were other leftwing revolutionaries in 1921 who were moving forward under the impact of the Russian revolution and its ideas. There was Hasrat Mohani, a militant Khilafatist leader who moved the "independence resolution" in the Ahmedabad session of the National Congress in December 1921. He used to call himself Islamic socialist. Later in 1925 he was the chairman of the reception committee of the First Communist Conference in Kanpur. There was Swami Kumarananda, a veteran communist leader today, who also tabled a draft of an "independence resolution" in which he stated "independent India would be a socialist republic".

Dange's pioneering effort went far ahead of all these and that is why within the course of less than a year, when he was able to get hold of the books of Marx, Engels and Lenin with the help of R. B. Lotwala, he accepted Marxism and in August 1922 started the *Socialist*, an English weekly from Bombay, the first communist journal in India.

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But he has not yet understood the thought of Marx as a science which enables one to understand social phenomena, as a weapon of social revolution, as a force that is going to open a new epoch of man's social evolution—the epoch of communism. That is why he is not yet identifying himself with communism, is not yet in a position to apply Marxism to the problem of India's national and social revolution correctly. But one sees that Dange is already impressed with the cogency and the critical and revolutionary spirit of Marxism and he is trying to use whatever he has understood from it, though pragmatically and eclectically to solve the contradiction which Gandhi's noncoopera-

tion movement with its creed of nonviolence had posed before leftwing revolutionaries in 1921.

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4. "Gandhi vs Lenin"

(Excerpts)

(a) FOREWORD

Now I will begin my own true foreword. I thought of writing this booklet when, at the beginning of the NCO movement, our opponents began to discredit it by pretending to find signs of Bolshevik activity in the movement and thus kill it. The public knew very little of the Bolsheviks beyond some fables, created by newspaper booming. Seeing this I thought of writing this booklet, to show the extreme contrast between the methods of NCO activity and the Bolshevik plan to accomplish their ideals. There is not much literature, available for such work, on the Russian revolution and the Bolsheviks; because our government takes great care to guard the gates of India against the entry of authentic literature on the subject. What has been allowed to enter, is written by men who hate the Bolsheviks and are of imperialistic tendencies. In such a situation, it is difficult to write with confidence on the subject. However my purpose will be served, if the booklet gives at least an idea of the elementary principles of the great movement in Russia and of the hypocrisy of those, who would class NCO with Bolshevism, if my countrymen come to recognise

GANDHI VS LENIN

BY
S. A. DANGE

PUBLISHERS
LIBERTY LITERATURE CO.
BOMBAY No. 2

GANDHI VS. LENIN.

BY

S. A. DANGE.

"We shall not give the Govt. assistance to collect revenue. We shall not assist them in carrying on the administration of justice. We shall have our own courts and if time comes, we shall not pay taxes."

Lok. B. G. TILAK.

in 1906.



the magnitude of extremism to which we will have to go in our struggle for emancipation and to expect and be ready for government terrorism, a veritable greater Ireland on the Indian soil!

(pp. ii-iii)

(b) CHAPTER III: "GANDHI VS LENIN"

Many in India are under the impression that the principle of nonviolence and religious transformation in Gandhism are due to the peculiar circumstances of India; that Gandhism advocates nonviolence because violence is not possible here against the government. Armed revolution being an impossibility, nonviolence has become the order of the day. But it is a gross mistake to suppose that. Even if Gandhi were just now to be transferred to the throne of Lenin, he would dissolve the Red Guards and the proletarian dictatorship; he would stop the industrialisation of Russia and give in her hands the spinning wheel and the handloom.

Gandhism has two aspects. One relates to the general evils, common to all human society and treats of the solution of problems affecting all. Another aspect treats of the special evil of despotism and proposes means to do away with it. We have treated of the first aspect. We will treat a little of the second.

If any country is subjected to despotism, whether foreign or native, in what way shall it subvert this despotism? Surely not by a military war, whether possible or not. Gandhism has put forward its plan of "nonviolent non-cooperation". This plan is directly inspired by Tolstoy's plan of nonviolent nonparticipation for the Russians. Tolstoy's plan was abandoned by Russia. India has adopted Gandhiji's plan. Instead of giving the plan of Gandhism we will give that of Tolstoy. On perusal of it we will find that it was Tolstoy who ruled the Congress of Calcutta, where the first principles of it were outlined and Gandhi was his representative! Tolstoy, cast out of Russia, has been born amongst us.

The underlying conception of the plan is simply this—that tyrants tyrannise because the tyrannised slaves participate in the act. Tolstoy gives three comprehensive commandments to a nonviolent noncooperator.

“He should first of all neither willingly nor under compulsion take any part in government activity and should therefore be neither a soldier nor a field-marshal nor a minister of state nor a tax-collector nor a witness nor an alderman nor a juryman nor a governor, nor a member of Parliament, nor in fact hold any office connected with violence. That is one thing.

“Secondly, such a man should not voluntarily pay taxes to government either directly or indirectly, nor should he accept money collected by taxes either as salary or as pension or as a reward, nor should he make use of government institutions supported by taxes collected by violence from the people.

“Thirdly a man, who desires to promote not his own well-being alone, but to better the position of people in general, should not appeal to government violence for the protection of his possessions in land or in other things nor to defend him and his near ones, but should possess land and all products of his own or other people’s toil, in so far as others do not claim them from him.”

Tolstoy anticipated our moderates, and continuing says, “People will say, ‘But such an activity is impossible; to refuse all participation in governmental affairs means to refuse to live. A man, who does not pay taxes will be punished and the tax will be collected from his property a man, who having no other means of livelihood refuses government service, will perish of hunger, with his family; the same will befall a man, who rejects government protection for his property and his person; not to make use of things that are taxed or of government institutions is quite impossible as the most necessary articles are often taxed and just the same way it is impossible to do without government institutions, such as the posts, roads, etc.’”

But there is the cool and deliberate answer of his to this. “Not everyone will be able to do this at once, but as men

will begin to feel the consciousness of these things they will begin to act."*

From the foregoing discussion it will be clear that Gandhism relies on individual purification, individual consciousness and conviction and individual action. Gandhism always lays stress upon the necessity of allowing everyone to act according to his conscience. It has unbounded faith in the inherent goodness of human nature, and believes that man left to himself to act according to his conscience will work out nothing but the good of himself and of his community. Complete absence of coercion of any kind and complete freedom of action find high credence in the elaborate system of Gandhism. (This nearly verges upon the English idea of liberty that minimum of government control or coercion is maximum of individual liberty.)** Bolshevism does not believe in the inherent goodness of human nature but advocates rather maximum of coercion or control (though as a passing phase) to teach man his duty towards the common good of the whole. Gandhism wishes to make a gift to the world of an Indian empire, a nationality founded on the basis of universal peace (ahimsa), peace between man and man and between man and every sentient creature. It is a fair dream, an earnest ideal. Practical Lenin, with the vision before him of a world-confederacy of the wolfish capitalist militarisms, always ready to shatter the peace of the poor man and of nations, ready to butcher liberty in its very infancy in any form, slowly murmurs, "In the hoary past the mighty Asoka had set up an empire and had tried to rule it according to his principles of ahimsa of nonviolence.† Where is that fabric of ahimsa now? Alas! ruthlessly shattered by the shock and collision of historic forces. Perhaps the prime maker of history has ordained that the world should pass through the process of a painful historic development from the brute to the man. Call upon the mighty nations of the earth to lay down their pride and hate, their sceptres and swords, and with redemptive humi-

* Tolstoy: *The Slavery of Our Times*.

** Seeley, *Introduction to Political Science*, Hegel, *Philosophy of History*.

† See edicts of Asoka.

lity, love and sacrifice, to fight in union the forces of rebarbarisation and they will laugh at you. Return their laugh with a thrash of the sword, with the very implements they have forged and you will be at peace, or ye shall be captive of their passions." A painful mysterious future, indeed, before us! But once more the land of Buddha has determined to follow Buddhism or Gandhism; may the fabric be not shattered again!!

To recapitulate:

Gandhi and Lenin

Common Aim: To destroy social evils of the day, especially the misery of the poor and to subvert despotism.

GANDHI

LENIN

Grounds

Cause: Modern civilisation, especially modern industrialisation and the consequent vices of humanity.

Cause: Seizure of the means of production, land, etc. by the capitalists, the inequality of wealth and consequent impoverishment of the proletariat, who form the majority of humanity.

Remedy

Remedy: Destroy the spirit of modern civilisation and mechanism.

Remedy: Keep modern acquisitions but make them work for common good i.e. utilise the surplus value, which now goes to the rich, by nationalising the means of production.

Steps

1. Despotism of capital and of every kind must go.

1. Despotism of capital and of every kind must go.

GANDHI

LENIN

2. Despotism rests on force.
 3. The force is made possible and maintained by those who are tyrannised over, by their participation or cooperation with the work of the army, taxation and law of the despots.
 4. Let all noncooperate and the edifice will fall.
 5. Religion and nonviolence alone can do this. For religion will teach the emptiness of modern acquisitions. Violence is usurped by violence. Nonviolence will be followed by nonviolence and chaos will be prevented, which is imminent upon the subversion of despotic power, as is shown by revolutions in history.
 6. When despotism falls at the hand of religion and nonviolence, a religious order of society will be
2. Despotism rests on force.
 3. The participation is not willingly given but is exacted by force, not necessarily supplied from the ranks of the tyrannised.
 4. They all will never do so because the interests of the majority are allied with that of the existing tyranny. The minority alone will work out the downfall and the majority will follow
 5. Tyranny will not be moved by religion, nonviolence and such other humane motives. Despotism will go so far as to exterminate the whole race of liberators. So it must be undermined and suppressed by its own means and ways. The chaos after the fall is temporary and men tired of the chaos soon evolve order, as shown by history.
 6. The dictates of conscience are vitiated by many external forces unless it is highly enlight-

GANDHI

the outcome. Spirit of religion, conscious of the emptiness of modernisation, will necessarily destroy it for the sake of common good. The law will be the law of conscience of man and humanity. Conscience will by its nature work for social good. And evils of capital, labour and the class war will disappear in such society. So purify men.

7. The end is a society of worshippers of god and religion and living according to the dictates of conscience.

LENIN

ened. It is not found in average men, and requires generations to evolve. So men must be compulsorily made to work for social good, which the capitalists being unwilling to do, the proletariat must do by establishing their dictatorship. Compulsion will generate a habit to work for common good and to hold everything for common good. Habit will be turned into an acquired instinct. When the instinct is acquired, the dictatorship will naturally vanish, being a mere passing phase and instrument.

7. The end is a society of workers and no idlers, working instinctively for the common good of the whole.

Source

Tolstoy

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Gandhism

Karl Marx

|
|

Bolshevism or Leninism

Sphere of work

India

Russia

(pp. 33-39)

(c) CHAPTER IV: "THE ARMED BLOW"

To avert calamity of his fall Kerensky and his government ordered the Petrograd garrison to cantonments on the front since that garrison was revolutionary and opposed to Kerensky and his half-hearted policy. The Congress of the Soviets was to meet on November 7th and that day was fixed for the armed blow of the Bolsheviks, which was to have for its object the conquest of the supreme government authority by the Soviets. The anti-Bolsheviks tried hard to suppress the rising. But the Bolsheviks were supported by the army. "The masses flocked to us irresistibly and their spirit rose higher and higher. Delegates would arrive from the trenches and ask us, at the sittings of the Petrograd Soviet, 'How long will this unbearable situation last? The soldiers have authorised us to tell you that if by the 15th of November no decisive steps are taken towards the peace, the trenches will be evacuated and the whole army will march back to the rear!'"

The Bolsheviks decided upon fulfilling their promise of the publication of all secret treaties. The soldiers would exclaim, "You say that full authority should pass into the hands of the Soviet? Then take it. Are you afraid that the front may not support you? Cast aside all doubt; the overwhelming mass of the soldiers are entirely on your side."

The Bolshevik party appointed a Military Revolutionary Committee which appointed commissioners to all railway stations. They kept all incoming and outgoing trains under close supervision. A continuous telephonic and motor connection was set up with all the neighbouring towns. The lower ranks of the railway servants at the stations and railway workers gave ready recognition to their commissioners.

But at the telephone exchange on November 6th, the telephone girls came out in opposition to the Soviet. The MR Committee sent a detachment and two small guns. So began the seizure of the administrative offices. Sailors and Red Guards were stationed in small detachments at the telegraph office, at the post office, and other public offices,

and measures were taken to gain possession of the State Bank. The Smolny Institute became the Soviet centre, where the MRC sat in permanent session. The moment was drawing near.

On November 7th the government in Winter Palace seized a Bolshevik paper. The Bolsheviks surrounded the palace and thus began the fight. News of the fight was brought to the MRC at the Smolny Institute and of the first victims on the Bolshevik side. "Everyone rose as though moved by some invisible signal and with a unanimity, which is only provoked by a deep moral intensity of feeling, sung a funeral march. He, who lived through this moment, will never forget it. The meeting came to an abrupt end. It was impossible to sit there, calmly discussing the theoretical question as to the method of constructing the government, with the echo reaching our ears of the fighting and firing at the walls of the Winter Palace." But the news of the fall and flight of Kerensky arrived. The Bolsheviks had won.

Kerensky tried to storm Petrograd with the help of the ignorant Cossacks, whom he led to believe that the Petrograd garrison was expecting them and longing for their help. But the truth came out and the Cossacks dispersed.

The Bolsheviks at once followed up their success, resolutely organised the government machinery and established the dictatorship of the workers, peasants and soldiers. They concluded peace with Germany and delivered Russia from destruction. This peace brought upon them the wrath of the English and the French. The invasions of General Denikin and General Wrangel—were repelled, for no one could withstand the vigour of the new life of the nation, and Russian revolution and liberty once more escaped from falling into the bondage of the capitalist states of Europe. In the earlier campaigns the Red Army, the mainstay of the Bolsheviks, was worsted for want of veteran generals to lead and skilled hands in the army to help the military manoeuvres, for, these were formerly supplied by the old nobility, who of course disdained to follow the new masters, their inveterate enemies. But soon the rank and file of the masses

produced best generals and best soldiers. The revolution had produced a new feeling of ardour, a new sense of health and power, which found expression in the enthusiasm of the soldiers. The soldiers did not care to see whether the new government was a dictatorship or a democracy. It was sufficient for them to know that the government was theirs and that it was threatened. They fought with all the zeal of a religious war. The danger was averted and peace restored.

Since Bolshevism became master of Russia, governments of all countries have been trying to discredit it in the minds of their people by painting it as devilish, atrocious and despotic. Every move bearing the least resemblance to communist activity is being repressed and the Bolsheviks are cut off from communicating with the people of any nation. Why is it so? What is the secret reason for this hatred? The reason lies in the avowed international policy of the Bolsheviks. In the Theses presented to the Second Congress of the Third International (of July 1920) there is an article by Lenin, called "First Sketch of the Theses on National and Colonial Questions". A passage in it runs thus*:

* These paras correspond to the fifth and sixth theses of Lenin's "Preliminary Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" submitted to the Second Comintern Congress:

"(5) The world political situation has now placed the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day. World political developments are of necessity concentrated on a single focus—the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Soviet Russian Republic, around which are inevitably grouped, on the one hand, the Soviet movements of the advanced workers in all countries, and, on the other, all the national liberation movements in the colonies and among the oppressed nationalities, who are learning from bitter experience that their only salvation lies in the Soviet system's victory over world imperialism.

"(6) Consequently, one cannot at present confine oneself to a bare recognition or proclamation of the need for closer union between the working people of the various nations; a policy must be pursued that will achieve the closest alliance, with Soviet Russia, of all the national and colonial liberation movements. The form of this alliance should be determined by the degree of development of the communist movement in the proletariat of each country, or of the bourgeois-democratic liberation movement of the workers and peasants in backward countries or among backward nationalities" (CW 31, p. 146).

"The present world situation in politics places on the order of the day the dictatorship of the proletariat; and all the events of world politics are inevitably concentrated round one centre of gravity! The struggle of the international bourgeoisie against the Soviet Republic, which inevitably groups round it on the one hand the Sovietist movements of the advanced working men of all countries, on the other hand all the national movements of emancipation of colonies and oppressed nations, which have been convinced by a bitter experience that there is no salvation for them except in the victory of the Soviet government over world imperialism.

"It is henceforth necessary to pursue the realisation of the strictest union of all the national and colonial movements of emancipation with Soviet Russia, by giving to this union forms corresponding to the degree of evolution of the proletarian movement (viz to assist the labour movement of England) among the proletariat of each country, or of the democratic bourgeois (viz to assist the movements of emancipation of countries like Ireland, Egypt and India) movement of emancipation among the workers and peasants of backward countries or backward nationalities."

Such avowed aggressive international policy, of helping and instigating the labour and peasantry of every country to dispossess capital, has naturally aroused the hatred of the capitalist states of the world towards Soviet Russia. In accordance with this policy and in conformity with his promise "to answer the guns of Germany with his leaflets" Lenin succeeded in overthrowing much of capitalism in Germany and helping the socialist labour in that country. The same danger (!) threatened all the other capitalist states of Europe. America and Japan were too far away to seriously think of the Russian Soviet programme. So England, France and other states hastened to avert the danger to their capitalist classes and the speedy and best method they thought of was to make war upon Russia, on her own soil and put an end to the Soviet government with all the fruits of the revolution. Had Karl Marx been alive he would have called it a war for the preservation and protection of a class of murderers! Napoleon had failed to carry war to the heart of Russia, with all his powers of a great general. So also

Germany with her best generals and army could not do it. What these had attempted vainly, England and France hoped to achieve through the dwarf-intellec[t]s of General Wrangel and General Denikin. (pp. 44-47)

* * *

Has the Russian revolution any significance in the history of mankind? Or is it simply a spectacle of mean scrambling for political power on the part of ambitious parties, wending their way to the throne through bloodshed of man? Wars and revolutions there have been, but many of them would not have been there but for the caprice of vain monarchs or for the interests of a class of power hunters. Does the Russian revolution belong to the same category or has it something new to announce to the world, as the French revolution had? Let us see. (p 49)

* * *

The Russian revolution is a beginning of the destruction of this "bourgeois period" and heralds a new day of the "labour period". This is the significance of the Bolshevik revolution. So from serfdom to bourgeois-slavery and from bourgeois-slavery to the Soviet or labour period; such are the stages of evolution in the idea of the state mechanism, the symbol of the objective unity of human interests. (p. 51)

(d) CHAPTER V: "THE INDIAN REVOLUTION"

We have remained too much in the foreign land of Russia and perhaps talked too much over it. But we hope to be excused on the ground that not only we, but the wisest heads in all nations are being irresistibly drawn towards that country by its latest noble and heroic success and the new stage in history that it announces. Another reason is that a forbidden fruit is the most tempting. Our high master-grinders try to discredit every move of ours by calling it a "Bolshevik move". If the people of India wish to retain their paradise, they must be kept away from this forbidden fruit, "Bolshevism". But while our high masters pose to act as angels to keep us away from it, secretly they

act the satan, driving us towards the forbidden fruit! Simply, the satan of the old story did it more gently by simply whispering. These of today lash us on the way!

What is the prospect before us? We are embarked on the struggle for independence and how do we hope to win it? Our constitutional agitation has accomplished almost nothing beyond arousing the nation. We now want a revolution, surely not with an "armed blow"—a revolution that is the most radical and sweeping change. The theoretical plan for accomplishing it, we have noticed in the third chapter. Let us try to see in what position we will drift when we put it into practice.

First, with regard to the movement of spinning and weaving on the charkha, which in the hyperbolical language is styled as our "munitions" for battle. What will this move bring about? One thing. It will irritate the English capitalist and English labour. Food and clothing are the two things that eat up the greatest part of man's income or require the greatest expenditure of the wealth of a nation for their production. As for food, India is self-sufficient at least to the extent that it does not drain our wealth. But for clothing, we have to depend upon England. It drains sixty crores of rupees yearly from our country. If the movement of spinning and weaving succeeds, it will make India richer by sixty crores yearly, and England poorer by the same amount. By it the English capitalists will lose their profits and the English labour will lose employment worth that much amount. Then how is it that British labour professes hearty support to our movement? The reason is simple. The labour of that country is at present employed in a death struggle with the capitalists. The meaning of the struggle will be clear if we will see in whose hands the greatest part of the wealth of England is locked.

Mr Pethick Lawrence has distributed the private wealth of the United Kingdom in 1913-14 among the rich, comfortable and poor classes in the following proportions:

Rich (owners of more than £10,000)—64 per cent of aggregate wealth.

Comfortable (owners of between £1,000 and £10,000)—24 per cent of the aggregate wealth.

Poor (owners of less than £1,000)—12 per cent of the aggregate wealth.

But by how many persons is this 64 per cent of the aggregate wealth held?

Percentage of population: Rich — 2 per cent.

Comfortable — 10 per cent.

Poor — 88 per cent.

So we see that 64 per cent of the whole wealth is enjoyed by only 2 per cent of the population, 24 per cent by 10 per cent of the population and only 12 per cent by 88 per cent of the population. The labour of England means this 88 per cent and its struggle means to get a share in the enormous volume of 64 per cent held by the capitalists. As long as the British labour is not given a share in this enormous volume, it will help the Indian movement, because by our struggle, we are harassing the British capitalists also and thus helping the labour movement of England. So it will be clear that the Labour Party of England is professing sympathy for us not from any philanthropic motives or from an inherent liking for liberty of other nations. It is sympathy generating from quite selfish motives. The Indian labour interests and the British labour interests are mutually opposed. Independent India would mean full development of our industries in all branches and an efficient, organised labour. That in turn would mean a stop to the vast mass of the expenditure of British labour, that is now employed for the needs of India. So sooner or later, we will have to struggle with the Labour Party also, if it comes into power in Parliament by ousting the present capitalist powers. This much is the meaning of the spinning and weaving movement in the programme of noncooperation. Suppose it fails to create a political crisis in the movement of labour vs capital in England, what is our next weapon? Because we are quite conscious of the limitations of this move. At the most it will feed the poor by giving them work and make India richer by sixty crores.

But what shall be our next step? The great power of England cannot be shaken by such a feeble blow. Have we then no future? We have. We have this before us. "A race which is suffering from the oppression of an alien conqueror

could win its freedom without any resort to force or armed violence. First the people must become convinced of the necessity of freedom, and, that accomplished, they must decline any longer to cooperate in the administration of the foreign power. Instead, they must build up their own state, within the state of those who have arrogated the role of rulers. Before long, if the people are united, the external state must crumble to pieces as the inner-state grows in fullness. The alien government may have enormous armies, machine-guns, tanks, poison-gas, aeroplanes and bombs but even by the most remorseless use of them it could never defeat resistance of this character. It may kill, but the very dead will work for its overthrow." We are convinced of the necessity for freedom. That accomplished, we are trying to build an inner-state. How? The alien state creates a moral prestige through its educational and legal institutions. If the feeling of awe and obedience created through them are destroyed, the alien government becomes morally extinct. This we have accomplished by the movement of the boycott of schools and colleges and law courts. We know that the boycott is not complete, but even the partial success has created the necessary feeling of considering the institutions as worthless and has destroyed the feeling of awe towards government authority. The moral ground destroyed, on what then does it rest now? Essentially on its military basis. The British government in India is morally extinct; now only the military government is existing by which we are coerced into submission to it. This militarism is maintained by us with our men and money. The army of the Indian government is roughly three lakhs of men out of which two lakhs are supplied by our native races. In our struggle will these two lakhs hold themselves aloof from the government and refuse action? If we refuse taxes to the government and if the government decides upon terrorism, as they are doing in Ireland, will the native army work or refuse? The ranks of the natives are filled in by men from United Provinces, the Punjab, Nepal, and Bhutan and by some Pathan tribes. As Prof. Seely expects, if the nationality movement gains the native army, the British empire in India will be at an end. "For, we are not really con-

querors of India, and we cannot rule her as conquerors; if we undertook to do so, it is not necessary to enquire whether we could succeed, for we should assuredly be ruined financially by the mere attempt." Even Mahatma Gandhi believes that the native army will refuse work, and says: "One lakh of Europeans, without our help, can only hold less than one-seventh of our villages each and it would be difficult for one man, even when physically present, to impose his will on, say, four-hundred men and women, the average population of an Indian village."* The last item of Gandhian programme is this. "We shall continue patiently to educate them (masses) politically till they are ready for safe action. As soon as we feel reasonably confident of non-violence continuing among them in spite of provoking executions, we shall certainly call upon the sepoy to lay down his arms and the peasantry to suspend payment of taxes. We are hoping that that time may never have to be reached. We shall have no stone unturned to avoid such a serious step. But we will not flinch when the moment has come and the need has arisen."**

We are quite sure, that the final step cannot be avoided. But we are diffident about the native army. The greater part of it is supplied by the Gurkhas, the Punjabis and the Pathans. Except the Punjabis, there is not the slightest chance of the nationality movement reaching these races and affecting them to an extent, that they would lay down their arms at our orders. So our work of building the inner-state must proceed without caring for the army. It can be done by the National Congress only. By the new Constitution, even the smallest units of the country, the villages, will be directly affected by the Congress activity. The one-crore members of the Congress must be men who will not flinch when the moment comes. The Congress must evolve its own ministries of education, law and order. The Congress must become the sovereign power of the nation. Then the final command for suspension of payment of taxes will go forth; and the true, earnest struggle shall begin. Men of real

* *Young India*, 9 March 1921.

** *Young India*, 30 March 1921.

worth will be tested in that final phase. The government will not shrink from terrorism as it has not shrunk from it in Ireland. All the atrocities committed in Ireland will be repeated here. Large town-areas like Bombay, Madras Calcutta will be coerced into submission, by a very simple act, that of stopping the water-supply. As for the peasantry and village-areas, they will be hunted down with all the instruments of war easily available, since the government is a strong military power. And moreover, the peasantry is always scattered over a large area and, therefore, unable to do any concerted action. Village by village will be lashed to submission and obedience to the oppressors. Then where is our hope? We cannot expect that every man will have the courage single-handed to bear everything mutely and still be faithful to the Congress mandate, to the nation's command, when his house, his wife, his children shall be insulted, flogged and persecuted before his very eyes! After all, we are human beings. Then? There is one remedy. The terrorism will be paralysed by only one thing. And it lies in the hands of Indian labour. The army movements in terrorism and their success will depend mainly upon the speedy transport of the soldiers from one centre to another, and of transport of foodstuffs and ammunition for the army. All this is done by Indian labour. If at the extreme moment, the Indian labour refuses to work in a solid mass, if the railwaymen, telegraph men, coolies and all sorts of labourers refuse to cooperate with the government, i.e. arrange what is called a sabotage, our success will be assured. The whole movement of government terrorism will be paralysed and it will have to yield. The sepoy may not lay down his arms, terrorism of the government may become financially possible contrary to the expectations of Seely, schools and colleges may not be emptied and merchants may not stop the foreign trade; but when the final command to suspend paying taxes shall go forth, if the Indian labour will not flinch and do its duty, we will succeed. So side by side with the education of the peasantry must be done the work of organising our labour and educating it. The labour organisation and education is a more hopeful task because the labourers always are found in large town-areas and in

enormous units; a fermenting political atmosphere prevails in such large cities, which makes them susceptible to rapid changes while the nature of their work makes them habituated to concerted action. This characteristic makes us confident to say that an organised Indian labour will not fail us at the time of action; it is our dire necessity. If we win, we will win only by the help of the proletariat, i.e. the labourers and peasantry. They are our main support. We are neither for the middle class nor for the corrupt intellectuals.

No one requires to be told that all this sabotage of the workers, our defence from terrorism by satyagraha, our building the inner-state until the outer crumbles down automatically is to proceed without any violence or disorder. Of course, when the huge mass of population of the Indian continent is to move for action, there is bound to be some violence and some disorder. But that would be nothing compared to those scenes with which mankind has become familiar in history. We are sure this our so-called violence will be nothing when considered by the side of Cromwell's execution of Charles I or the guillotine-rumblings of the French revolution. History cries out hoarsely to all these words "It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves... If it were possible that a people brought under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections against despotic power would be removed... we deplore the outrages that accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live... If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they themselves had taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission."* But after this was written, the methods of warfare

* Macaulay, *Milton*, p. 40.

have made much progress, and the method of nonviolent opposition has come in vogue. We are sure, our later historians will not have an occasion to write in this strain about us!

Some of our readers may charge us of being in a dream and writing of a dream that we may have seen of the future of India. Some may say: "No use talking of the future. Do the work near at the hand." To the former we will say that every ideal and every plan is a dream until it becomes a realised fact. Every plan of action to be done at the moment next to the one that is actually passing is speculation, dreaming. Thus every moment man is dreaming. We have only added together end to end many such moments, forming days and months at a stretch, and are dreaming about the plan for that much length of time. The greatest dreaming of a fabulous length of time and action is idealism. To the latter we will say, "We must start work with a clear idea of what we will have to suffer and to what length and sphere our activities may extend. It is no use starting the work nearest at hand and turn back half-way when the terrors of the future are revealed with all their hideousness. We must calculate upon the worst first and with a clear idea of it, start on which gives greater enduring power."

Only one point now and we finish. In swaraj (really a dream to some) we will be faced with the problem of labour vs capital and the agricultural problem. We must give preference of consideration to these problems first. For we shall win only with the help of the peasantry and labour, who will naturally expect an end of their miseries after emancipation. The spinning wheel alone will not solve the labour problem of modern civilisation. We cannot accept the communist plan, in all details, because it is too much fraught with coercion and violence. It must be accepted to this extent that great concerns like railways, mines and vast factory plants may be nationalised or controlled by the state. as even today they are being done in some countries. But how to prevent accumulation of capital in the hands of a few through speculation and such other means? We may try the following remedy for this. We may fix upon a maximum amount of wealth that an individual may be

allowed to possess. Let us take an example of a family man of our day. A man with a family of, say at least, four members requires a hundred and fifty rupees to live an honourable, decent and happy life without any cares. Of course, he is expected to have ambition, to provide something for his children, to have more luxuries of a happier life. The state must allow his powers of working out his ambition free play. But this ambition must be curtailed at some point. The state must stop him at a point where he may be judged to have become "very luxurious" according to the standard of average life of luxuriousness. The standard will vary according to the notions of each man. But we think, in India, we may as well stop a man accumulating beyond one lakh of rupees. When this maximum amount has been earned, the man may either stop his activity of earning or should devote the surplus to the state to be utilised for common good. This is only a suggestion. We have much time to think over its application and efficacy to solve the problem; because we must only think until we get swaraj.

The second problem. It is well-known that the agricultural land of India in most parts is accumulated in the hands of great landlords or zamindars who impoverish the peasants by high taxation and that the fruits of the peasants' honest toil go to the idle, unproductive landowners. The following figures will explain how the greatest part of agricultural land is divided into a few estates owned by capitalistic zamindars:

<i>Acres of land</i>	<i>No. of estates in which the land is divided</i>
25 million acres	90 estates (of course one estate is an ownership of one zamindar)
73 million acres	2000 estates
187 million acres	1/2 million estates
30 million acres	19 million estates

So we can see that there are only 19 million peasants, who are independent peasant-proprietors, and to their poor lot falls the bit of 30 million acres, i.e. a little more than one

and a half acres for one peasant-proprietor. The remaining acreage is cultivated by farmers who cannot be proprietors but are temporary tenants or leaseholders, whose real profit is swallowed by the zamindars and who can be turned out at their sweet will. The misery of the farmers can be solved only by breaking up the large estates into small holdings and turning them into peasant-proprietorships. Even in Europe, the same policy is being followed. "The accepted policy in all the agricultural and thickly populated countries of Europe, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere is the break up of large estates and the promotion of smallholding schemes by the state. It is by the break up of large estates and conversion of a landless, oppressed indebted and impoverished tenantry into a thrifty, free and flourishing class of peasant-proprietors, owning land in small and medium sized farms in conjunction with the organisation of rural credit", that we can hold and keep agricultural India in peace and prosperity. Surely by these reforms we shall displease the zamindars and capitalists. But for some years to come, we must face every unjust displeasure. In the end, we will triumph, we will be free, we will make the oppressed people free, for ours is a cause of justice, of right and of religion. With this we defy all. (pp. 52-61)

5. Dange on "Gandhi vs Lenin"

(a) HOW HE WROTE "GANDHI VS LENIN"

I do not belong to a worker's family. Ours could be termed a landlord-cum-banker family in the very old days and a middle-class family in the latter days. Our original home was in Nasik district and we were established by the Maratha rulers in the area of the present district of Dangs in Maharashtra. We derive the name "Dange" from being the overall controllers of the Dang area. The remnants of the mansion of the family still lie in ruins on the banks of the Godavari river in the village of Karanjgaon-Kothure.

The branch from which my father descended were bankers to the Holkars when they marched to the south. Near the ruins a big temple belonging to the family's private worship still stands, unattended. Even today, as it is, it would be worth several thousand rupees. An enterprising occupant of one of the ruins a few years ago found a small gold treasure when he dug up to rebuild a portion.

When my father died in 1920, he asked me to go over to the village and take charge of all these things. I never went. Only in 1954 when a political conference of the Bombay party and the then Left Socialists met in Nandgaon

for merger; I was taken there to see my "ancestral home". In the British period, the family migrated to Bombay. One of my uncles was a railway station master first and then became an assistant purser in the Watson Hotel in Bombay, the only big hotel in Bombay in those days. There was no Taj Mahal Hotel, I think, in those days. That was somewhere in 1905 or before.

In that position, he and his brother earned quite some money and all of it was kept particularly in the form of gold sovereigns.

In the latter part of his life my uncle became insane. His mania was to take a lot of gold coins in his hand and go out and start distributing them to the passers-by one by one. When the day's "quota" was finished, he would return. His wife and myself used to follow him and collect back the sovereigns which was easy to do because the passers-by very soon came to know the madman and his mania.

Our family owned some company shares also. For example, we had the original Tata Deferred shares acquired at the rate of Rs 30 and whose value in 1920 had gone up to something like Rs 1,300, if I remember right.

When the postwar boom came in 1918, my father, though he was employed in a solicitor's firm, traded on the stock exchange on a small scale. And as I had grown up and was going to college I assisted my father on stock exchange.

Our holdings and dealings were in the following: Tata Deferred, Scindia Steam, Colonial Steam, Elphinstone Mills, Kohinoor, Swadeshi, etc.

It is because of this that I began to know what the mills were, how profits were made and what speculations by the big bourgeoisie on the exchange meant to finance and industry. This knowledge helped me in my work in later days and was reflected in the writings in the *Socialist* and the struggles of the textile workers.

In 1919 I joined the Congress movement. Before that our student group had started a student magazine called the *Young Collegiate*. We arranged a welcome to Lala Lajpat Rai, when he returned from his exile. We got Tilak to preside over the meeting. We were threatened that we would be rusticated or imprisoned. No one would pay for the wel-

come because of fear. So a large part of the money required for the meeting and the address of welcome had to be found by me. My father helped in it.

In the Congress, I came across Umar Sobani, the well-known millowner, who owned several mills. He was one of the biggest financiers of the Bombay Congress and many political leaders. He also financed the *Bombay Chronicle*. He helped our magazine and movement.

The British ultimately ruined Umar in the cotton market by deceitful means. So he had to sell his two best mills to Sir Victor Sassoon, an international financier, who had newly entered the financial world in India on a very big scale. Our holdings in the Elphinstone Mills became the holdings under the new control of the Sassoons. After some years, Umar committed suicide.

My father died in 1920. I had by then already joined the noncooperation movement and left the college. We were conducting student strikes. I, in the company of two other persons (viz R. S. Nimbkar and Mantri), also traded on the stock exchange on the basis of the family holdings. In some we lost in the crisis that came in 1921 and in some we gained.

In those days of the postwar crisis, the money market was full of deals in the German mark, which was getting devaluated. There was craze of buying mark and the new share of floatings of new companies. It was an atmosphere of South Sea Bubble. We bought several thousands of the falling marks. But they were finally repudiated by the new German currency. We enjoyed the joke of the "paper" we carried with us for some time and then threw them away.

"Gandhi vs Lenin"

Even while working in the Congress, I disagreed with its leadership on many questions of policy and ideology. So I began to seek a new path. The news of the Russian revolution and the subsequent developments in the Soviet Union attracted me. Therefore I began to study the philosophy and ideology of the Russian revolution and wrote my book on *Gandhi vs Lenin*. I published it at my own cost. I

started a publishing company called the Liberty Literature Co. The book appeared in April 1921.

The British censorship around India was so rigid and all-pervading that very little literature of the Soviet Union or their Communist Party came to India. But I gathered some material from the works of some English writers and wrote my book. Though it had many shortcomings, in facts and theory, yet it stood on the side of Lenin as against the line of Tolstoy, which I said, was the line of Gandhi.

Approach of the Book

The book minced no words about the capitalists, and landlords and spoke of the nonpeaceful path as much clearly as was possible in the conditions of those days of British rule. If circumstances permit, I may reprint the book for historical study as a part of the archives of the Communist Party.

As a noncooperator, I was also doing teaching work in the National High School started by the Congress for non-cooperating students. My studies in the Russian revolution and the writing of the book had made me restless. I had some contacts with the workers, as the place where we lived was near the textile mills, which were later removed to the north of the city. From my very young days in Nasik city, I had imbibed the traditions of militant nationalism and anti-British feelings. Of that chapter, I cannot write in greater length in this brief account.

The publication of the book drew the attention of many people and many forces to my new thinking and activities.

One millionaire in Bombay by name R. B. Lotwala strangely enough was very much interested in socialism. He sent for me and wanted me to manage his library, read more books and write. He owned two daily newspapers and printing presses, and had a huge library. He visited England every year and brought literature from there. He financed all the activities of Vithalbhai Patel. He asked me to work for some time as Vithalbhai's secretary, which I did.

(New Age, 17 May 1964)

(b) DANGE'S OPINION AT MEERUT

Exh. P/507, a book *Gandhi vs Lenin* has been put to my account. This book was written by me in March 1921, when in obedience to the call of the Indian National Congress I left my college and joined the students' noncooperation movement. Though I joined noncooperation, I was not in thorough agreement with the Gandhian programme. In this book I have compared Gandhism and Leninism and have shown preference in favour of latter. In spite of this I have to say that the book is not a Leninist work at all. No Marxist literature was available at that time. In the book I have confounded the viewpoint of ordinary economic determinism with the historical materialism of Marx, and have in many places even shown leanings towards idealist philosophy, which has no place in Marxist materialism. I would not subscribe to that book today and it is of no use now in the service of communism, though in those days, I think, it was the first of its kind to appear in India and a breakthrough the web of lies that were being circulated about the Russian revolution and Lenin by the imperialist bourgeois press.

(Statement before the Meerut Court on
13 January 1932, pp. 2595-96.)

(c) DANGE'S VIEW IN 1971

In his article on "Comrade Ghate—Our First Secretary" Comrade Dange gives more details of how he came to write his first book *Gandhi vs Lenin*.

Dange describes the group in the Wilson College in which he was studying in 1919-20, the group which participated in the student upheaval and the noncooperation movement. "This group had as its compact circle, R. S. Nimbkar, S. A. Dange, V. D. Sathaye, R. V. Nadkarni, Deodhar and a few others."

"After Nagpur Congress of 1920 we picketed schools and colleges and emptied them. But the boycott fizzled out when we were all asked to give up militant activities and take to charkha spinning. Thousands trekked back to the schools and colleges and opted for the usual respectable degrees. Our leading group of five refused to go back. We tried to find a way to the Indian revolution, without the inhibitions of Gandhism."

He describes how he used to visit the "Nityanand Library" of R. B. Lotwala—which used to receive socialist papers from abroad and

among them was *Workers' Dreadnought* by Sylvia Pankhurst. Ghatge used to visit the same library but at that time Dange did not know him.

This group was later joined by S. V. Deshpande, "a first class first scholar from the Elphinstone College". In the discussions in the group, Dange says, some preferred the path of Sinn Fein and Irish rebellion while others stuck to Congress and Gandhism. He adds:

"I took up the position of the Russian revolution and Lenin. In this I was supported by V. D. Sathaye. We also accepted the national revolutionary content of Gandhism, of Sinn Fein and Irish and Turkish revolutions."

He describes how later they were joined by G. T. Madkholkar, V. H. Kulkarni, R. L. Paradkar, D. P. Navare, K. N. Joglekar and Parvate. He says, "... the totality of Gandhism, with its obscurantist outlook on socio-economic matters, was not acceptable to us, though its revolutionary slogan of destroying the satanic British government inspired us... while our group decided to participate in all the mass revolutionary programmes of Mahatma Gandhi, we wanted to push the thing further through working class actions in Bombay, which alone could be the logical conclusion of our leanings towards Bolshevism and the lessons of the Russian revolution. These debates began even before the historic Nagpur Congress session (December 1920). They gathered momentum when the first tide of the student movement ebbed away in the very first months of 1921. Our group had been thrown out of the Wilson College for conducting a struggle against compulsory teaching of the Bible and for nationalist and noncooperation activities in October 1920."

Regarding Gandhi vs Lenin he says

"In order to clarify our understanding, I took a short leave from active work after the Nagpur Congress of December 1920 and studied whatever scanty material was available on Lenin and Bolshevism. Not a single work by Lenin was available. But the books by critics and opponents were many. From those books, I tried to glean the essence of the Russian revolution. I finished writing a small booklet in March 1921 and published it in April 1921 (?). It was entitled *Gandhi vs Lenin*.

"The book was not very profound nor was it defining Leninism very correctly in some essentials. But its merit was that it was written on Indian soil, by a young rusticated college student leader, who in March 1921 should have been appearing for B.A. degree examination! Its second merit was that we openly owned up our sympathy for and a sort of political and philosophical adherence to Lenin, the working class and its path of revolution, in preference to Gandhism." Dange mentions that there was "a leading editorial in the *Bombay Chronicle* on the meaning of that book".*

* *Communism in India* by C. Kaye, 1926, mentions that in June 1922 a review of *Gandhi vs Lenin* appeared in *Bombay Chronicle*. This has not yet been located—C.A.

Second Session of the AITUC

We are reproducing here two documents of the second session of the AITUC held at Jharia from 30 November to 2 December 1921. We have already referred to the strike upsurge of 1921 in the introductory note to Dange's *Gandhi vs Lenin*. Jharia session reflected that upsurge. At that time a big strike was proceeding in the Jharia coalmines and a number of coalminers came to the platform of the AITUC session to narrate their condition of wages and work and to plead for support of the session to their struggle.

The documents we reproduce here are taken from the forthcoming publication—*AITUC—Fifty Years* (Vol. I).

The first document is an extract from a letter of the British Bureau of the Red Trade Union International, London, to the Jharia session of the AITUC. The second document is a resolution passed by the session calling upon Indian workers to render token aid to the famine-stricken region of Soviet Russia. Strictly speaking they are not documents of the history of the CPI. They have been included here to show that the *Indian trade union movement in its early years, before communists began playing a role in the same, was in touch with the international revolutionary trade union movement and was moved by the spirit and solidarity with the socialist Soviet Union.*

The British Bureau of the Red Trade Union International was a preparatory committee to form a British section of the Red Trade Union International. The Red Trade Union International, better known in India as RILU, was founded at the first congress of the red trade and industrial unions held in Moscow from 3 to 19 July 1921. This RTUI or RILU was originally formed to bring together trade union centres and

trade union federations of different countries, which did not belong to the Amsterdam Trade Union International. The RILU at its foundation was joined by the trade unions of the Soviet Union and by the revolutionary trade union centres of Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Estonia, France, Indonesia, Ireland, Canada, Columbia, Korea, Lithuania, Mongolia, Holland, Persia, Peru, Czechoslovakia and Uruguay. It also contained the representatives of the opportunist trade union groups from the reformist trade unions of some capitalist countries. The RILU, whose first general secretary was S. A. Lozovsky and which was dissolved in 1937, is the precursor of the present WFTU, as the Amsterdam International is of the present ICFTU (cf CW 32, pp. 565-66).

Lenin himself sent a message of greetings to the first world congress of the RILU on 19 July in which he said:

"The winning of trade unionists to the ideas of communism is making irresistible headway everywhere, in all countries, throughout the world. The process is sporadic, overcoming a thousand obstacles, but it is making irresistible progress. The International Congress of Trade Unions will quicken this movement. Communism will triumph in the trade unions. No power on earth can avert the collapse of capitalism and the victory of the working class over the bourgeoisie" (CW 32, p. 501).

The British Bureau of the RILU was formed probably in the autumn of 1921 and it is significant that by November it was sending a message to the second session of the AITUC. The message is signed by Tom Mann, the famous TU leader who was a founder member of the CPGB. This is surprising, however, as Shapurji Saklatvala, another founder member of the CPGB, was in touch with the AITUC since its inaugural congress. Saklatvala was active in the Workers' Welfare League for India in England which was organising Indian seamen serving in British ships plying between India and England. This Workers' Welfare League was appointed representative of the AITUC in England as appears from the resolutions of the first and second sessions. The letter to the chairman of the second (Jharia) session, AITUC, was signed by Tom Mann and N. Watkins of the British Bureau.

The second document we are quoting is a brief resolution passed by the Jharia session which expresses sympathy with the starving millions of Russia. In another place of the book *AITUC—Fifty Years*, from which we have quoted this resolution, it is stated, "The Jharia session of the AITUC adopted a resolution giving token aid to the people of Soviet Union." Shri G. V. Krishna Rao in his introduction to the Indian edition of *The New Russia* (see photostats on pp. 313-15) says that the Jharia session called upon Indian workers to donate one day's wage for famine-stricken people of Soviet Russia. Perhaps the exact full text of the resolution is not available. However this much is certain that the Jharia session meeting at the end of November 1921 takes note of the famine conditions then prevailing in Soviet Russia and expresses its sympathy and solidarity with the suffering population.

THE NEW RUSSIA

By R. W. POSTGATE

AND

T. A. JACKSON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By G. V. KRISHNA RAO



MADRAS

ARKA PUBLISHING HOUSE

1922

INTRODUCTION.

How Russia achieved its freedom is the theme of these few pages, written by my comrades, R. W. Postgate and T. A. Jackson. The great story of the Russian Revolution—the Revolution that enlarged men's minds and held the brilliant glories of a coming Dawn—encourages many of us, rank and file, in other parts of the world, to believe and work for the world proletariat. Russia has given us the signal that the time has come when we must close up our ranks and give a united front to the enemy. But we cared not to act and as a result we find that Russia has to pass through a great famine crisis.

The famine prevails over a large area some 800 miles in length and about 500 miles in width—from Kazan on the Volga to Astrakhan, at the mouth of Volga and the Caspian sea. Fifteen millions of people were affected by the famine. The suffering is acute, and many have been dying like flies. We hear already that the days of cannibalism have dawned in Russia, mothers killing their children and fathers their daughters in the frenzied agony of their hunger.

Europe does not feel shame at the actions of its statesmen who brought the whole world to the verge of destruction. The European people seem to have become callous and they do not seem to

exert their best to help Russia. The truth is they have become rotten to the core and exhibit sheer, brutal neglect, when one of the greatest crimes of the ages is being enacted in their name. Whilst the capitalists of Allied nations prevaricate, delay, and investigate through their commissions and committees to help Russia, we are glad to note that an International Workers' Famine Relief Organisation has sprung into existence. It has its headquarters at Berlin and the workers of all Europe are contributing their humble mite to be sent to Russia.

And what we, Indians, can do? It has been rightly resolved at the Trade Union Congress at Jharia to send monetary help to Russia. Then let Indian Labour act quickly and independently. Let Indian Labour make its own collections and prevent the International Capitalism from making use of the famine crisis for its own ends. Let all world workers unite and give one day's pay at once to the Russian Famine Fund to defeat the famine brought about by the nefarious plans of the Entente Capitalism and show that the international solidarity of the world's workers, successful as it has been on many occasions, can once again fight against the famine and crush the Capitalist-Imperialism of the world.

SWARAJYA OFFICE,

MADRAS.

1st June, 1922.

G. V. KRISHNA RAO.

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6. Documents of Jharia AITUC Session

(a) LETTER FROM THE BRITISH BUREAU OF RILU TO CHAIRMAN, JHARIA SESSION

In your great gathering in the dark and dusty coalfields of Bengal, where your fine human beings are ground down to dull slavery by the ambitions of capitalist exploiters of our country, we send you today hearty greetings. As the British Bureau of the Red Trade Union International, we convey to you, not only our British greetings, but even the greetings of the workers of other lands that are all now united in this great movement.

Comrades, in wishing you success, we know that we are wishing success of freedom to us all. A short-sighted labour movement of the past did not realise this great factor, and permitted the slavery of western capitalism to be enforced upon the innocent, helpless human beings of the East and we have now all seen the result.

Comrades, reflect for a while upon the world as it now lies shattered, divided, oppressed and looted. The thoughtless western workers, united together in that ignominious Amsterdam International, have themselves brought this ruin upon the world. They were played off as the very tools

This fact becomes all the more interesting when we find that a campaign "to render assistance to the famine-stricken in Soviet Russia" was initiated by the ECCI in July 1921. The official history of the Communist International records:

"On 30 July 1921 the ECCI called upon the workers and the working women of all countries to render assistance to the famine-stricken in Soviet Russia. The Comintern proposed to the communist parties to get into touch with all labour organisations and to form relief committees jointly with them. The task of these should be to collect from the broad masses of the people donation with which to purchase bread and medicines to be sent to the famine-stricken in Russia. An international committee for organising labour relief committee for the famine-stricken in Russia was set up in Berlin on the initiative of the ECCI. Out of this later was born the International Workers' Relief (IWR). Clara Zetkin was elected the chairman of this committee and Willi Munzenberg was the general secretary. The committee had on it among others Albert Einstein, A. Andersen Nexø, G. B. Shaw, Anatole France and Henri Barbusse. The committee did great work to help the famine-stricken" (CI-SHO, pp. 172-73).

In the *Inprecor*, Vol. 1, No. 5, dated 5 November 1921, the appeal of the ECCI to all sections of the CI was published. It said:

"The fourth anniversary of the proletarian revolution should be observed by the proletariat of the world in active work for Russia's sufferers. On this day all of labour's product which the exploiters do not appropriate should be given to the famished of Soviet Russia, those who were the first to venture an attack against the fortress of the system of exploitation. The day's wages for the needy champions of of the revolution—this is the slogan for the 7th November."

The *Inprecor* in English edition had just started publication from Berlin (end of October 1921) and though it had not yet come to the notice of the British government in India and not yet banned it is not likely that the issue dated 5 November reached the hands of the organisers of the Jharia session. It is more likely that the famine-relief campaign with world famous individuals like Albert Einstein, George Bernard Shaw and Anatole France on its committee was published in liberal and labour press of Britain and it is through that source the news reached the organisers of the Jharia session and got reflected in its resolution.

There were no communists or procommunists at the Jharia session. Dange and Muzaffar Ahmad did not attend the session. M. Singaravelu merely sent it a message. It also does not matter how the information reached the session. The resolution passed by the Jharia trade union congress was in tune with the then general nationalist political opinion in India which sympathised with Soviet Russia especially when it was being blockaded and sought to be strangled by the British imperialists headed by Churchill.

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Comrades, reflect for a while upon the world as it now lies shattered, divided, oppressed and looted. The thoughtless western workers, united together in that ignominious Amsterdam International, have themselves brought this ruin upon the world. They were played off as the very tools

and instruments of their capitalist bosses, and murdered one another, and robbed and looted one another. The soldiers of Britain and of Europe that march into the peaceful countries of the Far East to enslave mankind and to rob the natural wealth of foreign soils are all members of the proletariat and of the working classes that are members of the Amsterdam International. They talk of their freedom from oppression of their own masters, and thus they remain as imperialist and sectional as their own capitalist masters.

It is no use offering further comment upon the follies and vices of the old world. Let us all put our shoulders together and work for a different new world in which there is no imperialist race and no conquered races. The earth belongs to workers.

We wish you every success in organising the 18,000,000 of your great and cultured population, who today are living by industrial work and handicrafts. We invite you to join the great new world movement of international solidarity on absolutely equal terms. Nay, we go further and we ask you to join us as much for our benefit as for your own, for we realise that so long as you are slaves and you are not free we cannot be free in the west.

We trust that one of the first acts of your new committee will be to enter into communication with our British Council of this new International. We also hope that your committee will instruct your agents in London, namely, the Workers' Welfare League for India, to enter into communication with us on your behalf. We have watched from a distance the comic methods of the British Trades Union Committee, members of which are as imperialist in their outlook as their own masters, and we have seen how, in order to please the India Office bureaucrats, they have for the last two years defied your wishes and prevented your trusted comrades, like Mr Horniman and Mr Saklatvala from attending their congress, and stating the true facts of your case. We would welcome any comrades that you may appoint to attend our periodical conferences in Great Britain and we also trust that within a very short time, we shall be able to see, alongside our British section, our friends, comrades and brothers from India coming over to

take part in the congresses of the Red Trade Union International.

With many hearty wishes for your success, and with every promise of our support and cooperation and hearty good will.

(*Bombay Chronicle*, 3 December 1921, AITUC—*Fifty Years*, Vol. I, pp. 169-70)

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(b) RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE JHARIA SESSION

That this congress sends a message of sympathy to the starving millions of Russia and calls upon the workers of the world to help Russia in her struggle for peace, that this congress requests the Workers' Welfare League for India to ascertain how the state of unemployment of British workers can be speedily remedied by prompt cooperation between workers in India and those of Great Britain and Ireland. The congress extends fraternal greetings to Indian workers in Fiji and other parts, and instructs the Executive Committee to discover through communication with the workers in Fiji what Indian workers can do to help them in their struggle. That in case of strike sanctioned by the Trade Union Congress or its executive, the affiliated unions must contribute to maintain the strikers, if the strike extends over a period of more than a month and for this purpose instructs the Executive Committee to create special strikes insurance fund.

(AITUC—*Fifty Years*, p. 176)

On the Eve of Ahmedabad Congress Session

We are reproducing below one of the earliest articles on India from the *Communist International*, the monthly organ of the *Third International* (No 3 of 1921). The text is taken from the English edition of the magazine issued from Moscow, which started publication as a bimonthly from June 1919, i.e. only a couple of months after the foundation of the Comintern in March 1919.

Considering that its annual volume begins with 1 June and that it is published every two months, the issue No 3 of 1921 was probably published on 1 December 1921. The reference in the article to "the arrival of the Prince of Wales in India in Bombay" and his being "greeted by a general strike of the workers of that part" proves this. The Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay on 17 November 1921 (and not "at the end of October" as the article wrongly states) and the brief reference to the "national boycott" of the princely visit proves that the issue must have been published in the beginning of December 1921.

The article signed by "N" is probably by M N Roy and his name is not given because there is another article by Manabendranath Roy entitled "India in Transition Stage" in the same issue. This latter has been identified as chapter one of Roy's book *India in Transition*, entitled "Rise of the Bourgeoisie". We learn from Roy's *Memoirs* that the manuscript of the book was ready in October 1921, the English original of the book was published some time in April or May 1922, its introduction being dated "March 1922" (see our introductory note to the extracts from the book in Documents of 1922).

When the article refers to "a tremendous concentration of the national energy for a determined effort against the British bureaucracy" in the

last three months it is referring to the well known events of September, October and November 1921.

Firstly, we have the "Moplah rebellion"—uprising of the Muslim peasantry of Malabar district, which began at the end of August 1921, which went on during the succeeding months, till it was finally crushed towards beginning of 1922 through martial law and brutal military terror "Moplahs lost over 3,000 killed alone", while the total casualties among British Indian troops were "43 killed and 126 wounded" (India 1921-22, p. 20).

Secondly, there was a campaign of mass agitation and organisation throughout the country not only round the basic demands of the movement like redress of Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and swaraj and round the three slogans of action namely "boycott government educational institutes and law courts", "boycott reformed legislatures" and "boycott foreign cloth", but also round three new organisation slogans now issued by Gandhiji. These were "Bring Tilak Swaraj Fund collections to rupees one crore", "Enroll one crore Congress members", "Set up 20 Lakh charkhas in as many homes". Priority was given to the boycott of foreign cloth and to the three last organisational slogans as a preparation to launching the civil disobedience movement.

Thirdly, the Congress decided to organise a national boycott of all the functions connected with the visit of the Prince of Wales to India, which was scheduled to take place in November 1921. Throughout the month of October mass meetings were organised in the whole of India in preparation for this. In Bombay 17 November, the day of royal arrival, was marked by hartal and general strike and protest demonstrations which lasted for three days and the police effort to suppress them resulted in casualties amounting to 53 killed and approximately 400 wounded (India 1921-22, p. 89). "Throughout Calcutta and the principal towns of Northern India there was a general cessation of business" in which the "National Volunteers" were very active.

The official History of the Congress records: "Gandhi fasted for five days pending the restoration of order as penance for the excesses of the people. It was then that Gandhi made the statement that 'swaraj stunk in his nostrils'" (ibid, Vol I, p. 22)

The article quoting Independent refers to the "fulfilment of the programme passed at the Bezwada session of the Congress". This is inaccurate. What is meant is the session of the AICC and the Working Committee which met at Vijayawada on 31 March and 1 April and adopted the programme for campaign for the three organisational slogans.

The article refers to the exodus of thousands of Assam plantation workers and their effort to go to their respective homes in different provinces by railway.

The facts are as follows: In May 1921, due to depressed conditions in the tea plantation industry and low earnings, the plantation workers started an exodus and demanded to be repatriated to their homes. This became so serious that the European officials at Karimganj gave orders

not to sell tickets to them. The workers then decided to march on foot. Later due to the representations made by J. M. Sengupta tickets were sold to them. Still the authorities illegally detained about 600 of them at Chandpur station where they were brutally attacked. At Goalundo one thousand workers were made to get down from the train and kept under police surveillance. Next day they were driven away. In protest against the brutal attack on the workers at Chandpur the railwaymen of the Assam-Bengal railway and the employees of the river navigation company went on strike at about the same time in May 1921.

In view of the facts of the case the remark of the writer of the article that "the whole incident is very typical of the unwise tactics pursued by the nationalists in their use of labour to serve their own cause" seems to us to be totally misplaced. Further the facts also prove that this was not a case "of strike failures and repressions brought down upon the heads of the workers by their premature participation in political life". That the exodus of the plantation workers was caused not by worsening living and employment conditions in tea industry but by the propaganda of the noncooperators is the "official" version given (India 1921-22, p. 70) and not the actual fact. Similarly the sympathetic strike of the railway workers was not "precipitated by noncooperation demagogues" as the same official publication maintains but was a genuine working-class solidarity action.

Finally the article quotes at the end an excerpt from the speech which Gandhiji made at Lucknow on 7 August 1921. The actual quotation is as follows:

"In its policy of repression this province has surpassed any other province. I will nevertheless ask you to remain peaceful. If you can raise an army of fifty thousand workers prepared to guard the gate of freedom, you have my word for it that no power on earth can defeat this army and it will be able in three months either to mend this government or end it. I must repeat that careful attention needs be paid to Hindu-Muslim unity" (Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. 20, 1921, p. 477).

The article is remarkable for its positive understanding of Gandhiji's "nonviolent noncooperation" though it also lucidly points out to "the great deficiency of the Congress movement today" which is "lack of scientific understanding of the various class forces which must be dealt with". The article states:

"At first sight, Gandhi appears a mad prophet of peace and non-resistance. But closer examination of his utterances and tactics convinces one that he has deliberately chosen the only road open to Indian patriots under the present regime of force—the preaching of nonviolent noncooperation with the present government..."

"In her present circumstances, an armed rising is out of the question in India. Therefore, the only course left is an attempt to unify the national consciousness by other means, until the day comes when its strength will be irresistible..."

7. "Present Events in India"

The last three months in India are witnessing a tremendous concentration of the national energy for a determined effort against the British bureaucracy. All sections of the people, with the exception of the moderates, who have allied themselves with the existing system, have joined the noncooperation movement initiated by Gandhi, with the object of attaining swaraj or national self-government before the end of this year. The agrarian movement, the proletarian movement and the nationalist movement are moving concertedly towards one object, national independence, under the guidance of the All-India National Congress, which is the acknowledged head today of the Indian struggle against British rule.

This position of the National Congress has not been won in a day. Two years ago it was what it had always been, the political mouthpiece of the bourgeois intellectuals and capitalist class. But the growing disaffection of all classes of the people due to economic forces during and after the war, and to the policy of repression pursued by the British government, led to an instinctive urge for national guidance, for the marshalling under one banner of all discontented elements against the governing class. At first this

need found satisfaction in the personality of one man, Mr Gandhi, called by the people of India "Mahatma" or "Great Soul". But Gandhi himself needed an organisation for the dissemination of his doctrines, and he found it in the All-India National Congress. To break the class insularity of the latter, to make it truly representative of the national aspirations of all classes of Indians, he invited four thousand peasant delegates to the session of 1918—the first time that masses had obtained access to or manifested any interest in this body of educated Indian public opinion.

Since that time the concentration of the national forces towards a single goal has been proceeding rapidly. No section of the people knew exactly whither it was going, nor the necessary tactics to pursue. The mistakes and experience of the past few years have taught them both what is their goal and what methods are within the reach of the people to attain it. At first sight, Gandhi appears a mad prophet of peace and nonresistance. But closer examination of his utterances and tactics convinces one that he has deliberately chosen the only road open to Indian patriots under the present regime of force—the preaching of nonviolent non-cooperation with the present government. In the words of Lord Sydenham, uttered in the House of Lords in England in August of this year:

"The Gandhi movement is a new feature of Indian experience. Already Gandhi is responsible for the loss of more Indian lives than was caused in suppressing the most dangerous rebellion that India has ever seen. British authority is waning. Gandhi's plan of making life impossible for the Europeans in India is much more dangerous than an armed rising, which can always be met face to face and put down. Crime and corruption are steadily growing, and before long the masses will demand what the extremists already ask for—the end of British rule."

This is an acknowledgement on the part of the British of the wisdom of Gandhi's plan of campaign. In her present circumstances, an armed rising is out of the question in India. Therefore, the only course left is an attempt to unify the national consciousness by other means, until the day comes when its strength will be irresistible. Gandhi himself

gives us a glimpse of his own mind in a recent speech at Lucknow:

"Our first duty is to work on practical lines. It is not in our power to unsheathe the sword, and we cannot destroy this cruel kingdom with the sword. Poor men who have no aeroplanes become noncooperators, and there is no other remedy but nonviolent noncooperation. Our abuse and anger cannot destroy this kingdom, nor can cries of *Bande Mataram* (Hail Motherland) do it. With the aid of *swadeshi* we can overpower the government, and on attaining *swaraj* there is no power on earth that can check us."

The programme of Gandhi for national regeneration is fivefold, as laid down in the last session of the Indian National Congress and accepted by that body: (1) removal of untouchability; (2) removal of the curse of drink; (3) boycott of foreign cloth and the substitution of it by Indian mill-made and handspun cloth, known as *khaddar*; (4) registration of all congress members; (5) collection of the Tilak National Fund of one crore rupees (about one million pounds sterling) within two months. This programme has been laid before the people of India to fulfil by their own efforts, before the next session of the National Congress in December of this year. The best summary of the Congress policy is to be found in the congress organ, the *Independent* published daily at Allahabad; in its issue of August 10, it states editorially:

"There is a government in power and our object is to embarrass and discredit it by refusing to cooperate with it and by persuading the whole country to do likewise. The Congress is composed of a few thousand people returned on the suffrage of 10,000,000 men and women. But the mere fact that a crore of people have gotten on the Congress registers is no proof that they have faith enough in the Congress or are patriots enough to noncooperate with the government to the uttermost. We know the majority of the country are sympathetic towards noncooperation, but the depth and value of this sympathy are difficult to estimate. The original gulf between the English-knowing Indians and the majority of the people is not yet completely filled up. Though the Congress spoke in the name of the people, the

claim had not been made good beyond challenge. But since the days of satyagraha, the process of mutual understanding has gone on apace. In 1919, no one knew what measure of popular support would sustain the opposition of the educated classes to the Rowlatt Bill. It was by a stroke of inspiration that Mr Gandhi thought of the hartal (national strike) as a symbol and weapon of the popular will. The wonderful success of the hartal of April 6 strengthened the leadership and frightened the government equally. From time to time, tasks have been laid on the nation with a view to gauging the extent of popular support for its policy. In great things and small, the policy has been to bring the Congress workers in close touch with the people and of testing the reality of the influence of nationalism over them. The fulfilment of the programme passed at the Bezwada session of the Congress is proof positive of the country's response. It is something more than a national discipline in self-denial; it is also an exercise in association, friendliness and leadership. The programme adopted points to a time when Congress workers, labouring in cities and districts, will build up credit for themselves and challenge the authority of the government. The Congress is an instrument, not only of revolution, but of slow constructive statesmanship."

So we find the confession that the Congress is slowly feeling its way to the national confidence, making sure of strong, popular support before venturing to launch the country into what it openly declares to be the next step of its programme: mass civil disobedience and the nonpayment of taxes. The creation of a central body, which the majority of the population of all castes and creeds and tongues looks to as an authority to be obeyed over the heads of the British governmental machine, is in itself no small achievement. The Congress organisation has spread itself into every small village and hamlet. Volunteer and paid organisers and propagandists infest the country, preaching national solidarity, resistance by nonviolent methods such as strikes and hartals to British oppression; working for Hindu-Moslem unity by identifying the Mussulman claim to the integrity of the Khilafat with the

national demand for self-government. The stress upon nonviolence acted as dust thrown in the eyes of British officialdom, whose vigilance to suppress every revolutionary attempt at organisation was allayed by this subterfuge until the propaganda had done its work and the movement was too widespread and deeply rooted to put down. Indians are ready to ensure all repressions to attain the desired end. Gandhi sounds the call to national self-sacrifice in the following words:

"We must treat arrest and imprisonment as the normal condition of the life of the noncooperator. We must seek it as the soldier who goes to battle seeks death. Our triumph consists in thousands being led to prison like lambs to the slaughter-house for no wrong whatever. The greater our innocence, the greater our strength and the swifter our victory. Complete civil disobedience is a state of peaceful rebellion, a refusal to obey every single state-made law. It is certainly more dangerous than an armed rebellion. It is my firm conviction that if we can bring about a successful boycott of foreign cloth, we can inaugurate civil disobedience on a scale that no government can resist."

The boycott of foreign cloth is the preliminary test of national solidarity before introducing the last stage of the national struggle, which Gandhi calls "civil disobedience" including nonpayment of taxes, and which must inevitably lead to an open break with the government. Whether the boycott will be any more successful than the earlier attempt at noncooperation by the surrender of government posts and emptying of government schools remains to be seen. So far, popular enthusiasm runs high. Every city and town is filled with Congress committees whose business it is to preach boycott and destruction of foreign cloth. Huge bonfires are made in all the great centres, where tens of thousands of people gather to burn their foreign wearing apparel, and take a vow henceforth to wear only the home-spun "khaddar" made on Indian looms and of Indian yarn. Pledges are given by the great Indian importing houses not to import foreign goods; Indian millowners are appealed to not to take advantage of the national enthusiasm by raising their prices. It is not the purpose of this article to

discuss the economic soundness of the boycott, based upon sentiment and against whose success many factors are working. Our concern is with the larger issue, the undeniable existence in India of a widespread feeling of national solidarity, of national enthusiasm and desire to end the present system of government which presages an approaching struggle.

In the words of the *Independent* of August 9th: "Boycott of foreign goods is negative and preliminary: swadeshi (wearing of home-made goods) is positive and permanent. The linking up of the political idea of swaraj (self-government) with the factor of economic freedom and self-sufficiency and the necessary connection between politics and economics are not obvious on the surface nor even easy of perception without a certain amount of mental preparation. If by any means India ceases to be profitable to England, the British hold on us will relax and finally vanish. It would not be worth England's while to hold the country by a policy which is the negation of popular will. If England finds there is no profit in the Indian empire, she will let the Indians follow their own path. The present boycott is a permanent measure, intended to withdraw all temptations from other countries, including England, to invade and hold India for her markets."

The idea is that all imports of foreign cloth will cease with the refusal of Indians to purchase, and that the nation will wear only Indian made clothing. Whether or not the whole nation will lend itself to the boycott, the next few months will show. The idea is partly economic, that is, to encourage Indian industries and to damage English trade, but there is another idea behind this, to measure to what extent the Indian people are ready to support the resolutions of the Congress, in other words, to put the feeling of national solidarity to test. In the words of the nationalists, "The boycott of foreign cloth is another test whose successful fulfilment will show that the country is solidly behind the Congress and secondly, that the influence of Congressmen all over the country is so strong that the Congress would be justified in calling for mass civil disobedience and nonpayment of taxes. The Congress which could work

a revolution in the social and economic habits of the nation may be trusted to effect a political revolution at any moment."

Thus Gandhi's cry of "Back to the charkha" (spinning-wheel) has an immediate practical purpose, whatever one may think of the economic impossibility of making good by hand-weaving the enormous amount of cloth formerly imported to clothe the Indian people. At present, Indian mills are able to supply only one-half the necessary quantity. Just as the preaching of nonviolence, aside from his personal philosophy, was useful in giving room for nationalistic propaganda on a wide scale, which would otherwise have been impossible owing to governmental repression, so the idea behind the boycott movement is twofold: one, to encourage the native industry by prohibiting foreign goods, the other, to teach the masses nationalism by imposing upon them a practical task for performance, and by nation-wide propaganda, to unify the people yet more for a further step in advance.

At present writing, the Prince of Wales has arrived in India, and according to a resolution passed in the last session of the Congress, his visit is being boycotted by Indian nationalists of all classes except the moderates. Upon his arrival in Bombay at the end of October, he was greeted by a general strike of the workers of that port, and no Indian of any position participated in the festivities arranged for his reception. This policy has been adopted, because his visit has a political motive behind it "to re-establish the lost prestige of the government, which the Congress has pledged itself to destroy utterly". The true value of such a national boycott lies, again, in the proof it will give of Congress leadership over the nation as a whole.

In the delicate question of Hindu-Moslem unity, we find the Congress again pursuing tactics seemingly impracticable, with a very definite object in view. What is the idea of a nation whose population is overwhelmingly Hindu, giving open support to the Khilafat movement of the Mussulmans which, in the words of an Englishman, "bears as much relation to Indian nationalism as the Irish Sinn Fein movement does to the Grand Llama of Tibet"? The

Mussulmans of India have heretofore been separated from the Hindu population by a deliberate policy of the British to "divide and rule". Special privileges were granted to Indian Mohammedans, and religious differences were artificially kept alive by provocation on the part of government agents. Today Hindus and Moslems have made common cause against the government and although the sentimental grounds—support of the Khilafat movement by the Hindus in return for Muslim support of the nationalist programme—a real fusion of the leaders has been brought about, and the All-India Khilafat Committee has voluntarily submitted itself to the leadership of the Indian National Congress, pledging its members to abide by the decisions of that body, while such prominent leaders of the Mussulman element as the two Ali brothers, are identified with the Congress movement and devotedly attached to the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The task of the latter is to persuade Indian Mussulmans to regard themselves as first of all Indians, and to fight the battle of the Khilafat on Indian soil. In his own words: "The Mussulmans are impatient about the Khilafat wrongs, but the shortest and straightest way of serving the Khilafat is swadeshi. By it we make India powerful and an increase in Indian power means increased power to defend the Khilafat." And Mohammed Ali, speaking together with Gandhi at a mass meeting in Lucknow, declared that "the Indian Muslims have chosen the path of nonviolent noncooperation in the belief that by this course they could best secure the interests of their country and their faith".

At all meetings of the Central and District Khilafat Committees, the Congress resolutions on noncooperation, nonviolence, boycott of foreign goods, the wearing of home-spun cloth and the attainment of swaraj have been unanimously adopted. The Mohammedans of several districts in which repression is very strong have applied to the Congress for permission to start civil disobedience, thus acknowledging the Congress as their head. Resolutions against cow-killing and sacrifice in the Moslem religious festivals have been passed in various parts of India, as a means of satisfying the Hindu religious feeling, and both Hindus and Mussulmans are prosecuting the noncooperation

campaign with equal vigour and determination. Shaukat Ali, in a recent speech delivered just before his arrest, declared that "Hindus and Mussulmans should make an effort to make the noncooperation campaign a success. The government has the chance to make peace with us and to meet our chief by the end of September. Reconciliation in October would be very difficult, and in December, God help us, we will declare our independence."

The most striking success of the Congress campaign has been the collection within the specified period of two months of the national fund of the million pounds sterling to be used for nationalistic propaganda and to purchase ten million charkhas (spinning-wheels) in order to stimulate the home manufacture of wearing apparel. In a vigorous campaign organised throughout the length and breadth of India, the Congress leaders appealed for contribution to the fund from all classes of the people. Subcommittees sprang up in every town, and no village was too small to contribute its quota. Indian women, who have been forsaking their secluded mode of life during the past few years, took up the cause with enthusiasm contributing their jewels, rich clothing and dowries to the fund. Collection poured in from huge mass meetings held in every part of India, and on the last night of the date set, just two months from the time of starting, the Congress Committee was able to announce the successful completion of this part of its programme—a million pounds was in the national treasury contributed by Indians of every caste and creed to further the cause of national independence.

Equally successful has been the registration of membership on the Congress rolls of ten million names, who stand pledged to support all measures passed by that body. As a further means of coordination and centralisation, a Working Committee of seven members has been elected to carry on the campaign and this committee, which consists of the seven most prominent men, Hindus and Mussulmans, in the Indian nationalist movement, is invested with plenary powers until the next session of the Congress in December of this year. The figure of Gandhi, by common consent, still carries the greatest weight in this Working Committee, and

there has been talk from the opposition party of moderates, against the "Gandhian dictatorship". Apropos of this term, Mr Stokes, an American missionary who has identified himself with the noncooperation movement in India, states: "The two forces of bureaucracy and of nationalism are now closing for a final struggle and trial of strength. The next few months will be the most critical. Our opponents will act and speak as one. This is and has always been their strength, while our weakness has always been division of counsels. We have no other way of assuring unanimity at this juncture than by building up our unity about the personality of Mahatmaji. His personality, and the dynamic will-force associated with it, are our greatest assets today."

However, the personality of Gandhi, compelling as it is, is not the only factor in the present Indian movement. C. R. Das has been elected president of the next session of the Congress by an overwhelming majority and he ranks close to Gandhi in power and popularity, while the two Ali brothers and Lajpat Rai have great weight and influence. New leaders are being thrown on the screen of Indian public with astonishing rapidity, and these new leaders are drawn from the more youthful and progressive sections of the middle class, who respond to the growing revolutionary spirit of the masses, that pushes them ever leftward.

The great deficiency of the Congress movement today is lack of scientific understanding of the various social forces which must be dealt with. The lack of comprehension is shown by the tactics pursued by the leaders in regard to the two most important factors in present-day Indian life—the city proletariat and the discontented peasantry, which for the last four years have been showing signs of extreme activity in an effort to change their miserable situation. The new trade union movement has been almost completely neglected by the nationalist leaders and has been allowed to fall into the hands of the reactionary British trade unionists and paid government agents. Yet despite this neglect of the constructive side of Indian trade unionism, the nationalists have not hesitated to exploit the strike movement of the city workers in behalf of the nationalist cause, sending their propagandists to the factories and workers and

inducing them to declare political strikes under circumstances which inevitably led to catastrophe, failure and loss of life. Such was the recent strike of the railway and steamship workers at Chandpur called by the nationalists in response to the refusal of the railway and steamship companies to grant free transport to the coolies fleeing away from the Assam tea gardens. The government, as always in cases of this kind, promptly intervened on the side of the companies and sent armed police to "maintain law and order" and incidentally to break the strike, forcing the workers to return to their jobs. The case of the returning coolies from Assam is another instance of unwise nationalist agitation among a defenceless and ignorant mass of unskilled workers. Noncooperators urged them to leave their badly-paid and onerous labour in the unhealthy tea gardens of Assam, and to return to their native villages. A huge exodus commenced, the tea-planters became frightened, induced the steamship companies to refuse transport to the coolies, who were abandoned to hunger and exposed to cold at the river and railway termini. Cholera broke out among them, causing several hundred deaths. At the instigation of the tea-planters, the government sent police to drive the wretched coolies away from the poor shelter of the third class waiting rooms into the open fields. It needed all the organisation of the noncooperators to repair the serious mischief by sending medical aid, food, and collecting money to help the unfortunate sufferers. The strike of the steamship and railway workers described above was the result, and this too ended in disaster. This whole incident is a very typical one of the unwise tactics pursued by the nationalists in their use of labour to serve their own cause, and as a result of the long series of strike failures and repression brought down upon the heads of the workers by their premature participation in political life, the strike movement in India has suffered a temporary relapse, and the workers are abandoning their political activity for the domain of organisation and improvement by arbitration of their economic lot. In a recent pronouncement of the government policy towards labour, uttered in one of the provincial legislative councils, it is declared that: "The government policy in all

industrial strikes has been to maintain law and order and to effect friendly settlements when opportunity offers. A census of industrial wages and a cost of living index is being taken, and a chain of labour bureaux will be established in every province. Statistics will show in any trade dispute whether or not the employees are being paid the standard wage and if their wages are above or below the cost of living for persons of that class of life." Recently, the government has adopted the policy of intervening in all disputes between capital and labour, and of enforcing a settlement adverse to the strikers. Law-suits are instituted by the government against the workers, in cases where rioting occurs, and no repression has been spared to discourage the militant spirit of labour which was so marked a feature of the early days of the Indian trade union movement. A recent application has been made to the Government of India by the general secretary of the North Western Railway Union that Indian railwaymen be deputed to attend the International Labour Conference in Geneva, as labour of other industries have previously been represented there. All-India Trade Union Congress is affiliated with the British Labour Party.

What is true for the industrial proletariat holds good for the agricultural labourers. As yet no help has been given by the nationalists to the agrarian struggle that is being waged in all parts of India, and every attempt on the part of the miserable agriculturists to help themselves by a show of force has been repressed and discouraged by the Congress leaders. The recent rising of the kisan sabhas in the United Provinces was put down by the government troops with brutal force, and the Congress workers went among them, attempting to restrain their violence, deprecating the looting of houses and burning of crops of the landlords by the enraged field workers, and preaching to them nonviolence and self-discipline with the vague promise of instituting, at some future day, the nonpayment of taxes as a form of mass civil disobedience on the part of the poor and landless peasantry. This rising of the kisan sabhas forced the government to introduce a bill in the Legislative Council, amending the Tenancy Act of 1886 with a view to improving the

condition of the agricultural workers. But the amendment met with so fierce a resistance on the part of the talukdars or great landlords, that most of the features in favour of the poor tenants were dropped from the bill, and several new clauses introduced which give the landlord added power, as for example, the right to eject any tenant from a leasehold whose character is held to be objectionable.

Like the rising of the kisan sabhas in the north, the Moplah rising on the southern coast of Malabar, in August-September of this year, is also a protest of the underpaid and overworked agricultural labourers and poor peasants against the oppression of the landlords. Fighting between the Moplahs and the government troops still continues, but no action has been taken by the Congress leaders in behalf of the unfortunate workers who are being massacred in great numbers and nonviolence is being preached as assiduously as ever.

Undoubtedly, the nationalists of the Congress movement hold that the time is not ripe for an open declaration of war against the government, and they fear to risk a premature trial of strength against bureaucracy so well equipped with all the machinery of repression. Gandhi's ingenious idea of having the whole population go to jail seems to them the only feasible plan until such time as the nation feels itself united and strong enough for a direct challenge to the existing government. Meantime, the government itself is taking steps to suppress the movement that is sweeping the country. The jails are filled with noncooperators, detained on the flimsiest charges, or on no charge at all. To wear a Gandhi cap, or a suit of khaddar homespun cloth is sufficient for a government servant to lose his job, and often, to go to jail. Houses are searched, newspapers suppressed, meetings prohibited, speakers summoned to court and held accountable for their slightest utterance. Sir George Lloyd, Governor of Bombay Province, addressing a recent meeting of non-Brahmins declared: "The campaign of vilification in the press is growing steadily worse and worse, more bitter and unbridled. Public platforms are being used more and more for the preaching of open sedition. The path of the government is clear. Let it be clearly understood and always

remembered that the government's first duty is to maintain law and order, and that duty will be rigidly carried out. The government would fail in its duty if it allowed infringements of the law to go unpunished and the fatal seed of indiscipline and contempt for legality is allowed to lead to chaos and anarchy." To which utterance the nationalists responded: "Open sedition, not secret, is spreading disaffection against the present system of government. Every official ought by this time to have realised that the nation has been awakened to a degree that will make it impossible for any amount of repression to break its spirit. 'Chaos and anarchy', in the sense used by His Excellency, are hardly to be stopped. For nothing is so chaotic and anarchic as governing men without their free consent."

In addition to repressive measures, the government tries by other means to break the strength of the present movement towards national unity. Under its fostering care, the Non-Brahmin League is growing, an organisation whose object is to spread bitterness between the Hindus of different castes. Likewise, the aman sabhas and anti-noncooperation societies, now being organised in every Indian town, are openly acknowledged to be of official origin and of artificial growth, and as such, must fail largely in their purpose. The Indian moderates, organised into the Liberal League, whose platform is "cooperation with the present government and attainment of home rule by gradual stages within the British empire", represent the only section of the Indian people, aside from the native princes, which avowedly supports the government and stands behind its reactionary policy at the present time. By their participation in the Reform Councils recently inaugurated under Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme, the moderates give constitutional sanction to the bureaucratic tyranny. In a speech delivered by Dr Asthana, president of the Liberal League Conference, held recently in Lucknow, the attitude of the moderates is thus defined:

"No one can deny that the present ferment in India is due more to economic than to political causes. Had it not been for the acute distress caused by the rise in prices, by the dearness of food and cloth, the two prime necessities of life, we should not have heard of agrarian riots among us.

The average rioter requires no more than cheap grains and cheap cloth, and if these are within his reach he cares but little for political doctrines and systems of government. We are moving in a vicious circle. Prices have risen and therefore wages have risen, and because wages have risen, prices are going still higher. It is the duty of the government to break this vicious circle. We liberals are working to our best ability to make the reforms a success."

It is of this class of Indians that Gandhi speaks when he addressed a mass meeting recently in the following words: "Bureaucracy does not mean Englishmen only. It also means thousands of Indians trained by them. The Indian soldier and civilian are being used more and more for advancing the system. Our demoralisation is complete when we become willing tools in the hands of the tyrant. The repression now assuming definite shape in our land is therefore of a far more dangerous type than hitherto." And speaking at Lucknow before a hundred thousand people, who waited in the rain for his arrival and who listened to him reverently until the end of his two hours' discourse, Gandhi proposed the remedy for the present state of affairs: "We must answer the policy of government repression by creating in every province an army of fifty thousand workers who will look to jail as their liberation, and whom no army in the world can crush. Within three months, we will either mend this present government or end it."

N.

Communist Manifesto to Ahmedabad Congress

The text we reproduce here is taken from M. N. Roy's book *One Year of Noncooperation*. The title page of this book gives the subtitle of the book as "From Ahmedabad to Gaya". The authors are given as "Manabendra Nath Roy and Evelyn Roy" and it is said to be "Published by the Communist Party of India, Calcutta, 1923". The print-line is obviously fictitious. The book was printed by Roy illegally, probably in Berlin.

In the introduction to the book, which is signed by Manabendra Roy and is dated April 1923, he writes:

"The contents of the present book are of historical value, in that they vindicate the correctness of the social outlook, economic theories and political principles held by our party. They are written over the period of more than a year, and deal with almost all the critical stages of the noncooperation campaign. In spite of their publication at various times, in various forms and through various means, a uniform line of reasoning, a uniform method of interpreting events runs through them, thus giving them the character of a comprehensive picture of a given historical epoch. The warning given to the Congress in the manifesto issued on the eve of the Ahmedabad session was not heeded. The present plight of noncooperation will convince all honest revolutionaries of the correctness of that warning, which in the meantime, opened the eyes of not a few who have infused vigour into the movement in some way or other. The collapse of noncooperation to us does not mean a defeat of the Indian national struggle, not even a weakening of it. On the contrary, it signifies the development of the revolutionary forces whose first confused expression was the noncooperation movement. We

only intend to show in the light of historical experience that it was possible only for Marxian materialists to see through this confusion, and point out to sincere revolutionaries the solid bedrock on which the movement was reared" (pp. 7-8).

From the table of contents we see that the Chapter I of the book is the manifesto to the 36th Indian National Congress (i.e. the Ahmedabad session—December end 1921). Chapter X is the programme given in the manifesto to the Gaya Congress, written probably in the beginning of December 1922. The "Open Letter to C. R. Das" and the concluding chapters (XIV & XV) were written in February 1923. So the contents of the book were "written over the period of more than a year".

M. N. Roy in his *Memoirs* devotes a whole chapter to the "Appeal to the Ahmedabad Congress" (RM, pp. 540-48). Some time after or about the time of the Third Congress of the Comintern (June-July 1921), when all the Indian students from Tashkent school were transferred to the Communist University for Toilers of the East Roy received a stack of Indian newspapers from Borodin, containing full reports of the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress (December end 1920) and of the events in India in succeeding months. He gathered from these press reports that C. R. Das, who was elected as the president of the next Congress session to be held in Ahmedabad, "did not fully share Gandhi's ideas and was sceptical about the possibilities of nonviolent noncooperation. He might favour the alternative method of mass revolutionary struggle, if a programme of developing it was submitted for his consideration." So Roy "thought that it might be a useful step if I addressed an appeal to the Ahmedabad Congress, recommending the acceptance of the ideology of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the appropriate economic and social programme" (p. 545).

Roy records that Lenin and Stalin welcomed the idea of such a manifesto. The appeal argued that the noncooperation movement must be supported by the mass actions of the workers and peasants—"a general strike of railway workers could any day paralyse the life of the country" and "The great potentialities of an organised peasant movement to resist exactions and oppressions was also pointed out." The appeal itemised the minimum demands of the masses, and the delegates to the session were exhorted to "launch an uncompromising mass movement in support of the demands".

Roy further records: "Indian students who had come to Moscow to join the Communist University were terribly enthused by the appeal, which presented to them a concrete picture of the revolution to be brought about in India in the near future" (RM, pp. 547-48). The appeal was signed by M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji. It was printed in Moscow as a large size, four page leaflet. "Nalini Gupta volunteered to go to India immediately carrying a large bundle of leaflets with him." Nalini Gupta, it will be remembered, came to Moscow with the group of Indian revolutionaries in the middle of 1921. He remained in Moscow and joined Roy. Nalini reached India some time in December 1921. Roy says that

the copies of the appeal brought by Nalini Gupta were "distributed and broadcast throughout the country before the Congress session and to the delegates at Ahmedabad. The document... was reproduced in part in a number of newspapers" (RM, p. 547). The appeal did not reach the hands of C. R. Das who was arrested before the session. Roy says that the appeal came before the Congress in the form of a non-official resolution submitted for discussion, because two delegates from Ajmer got it reprinted under their own signatures and submitted to the Congress for the purpose. Roy claims that Moulana Hasrat Mohani who moved the resolution for "complete independence" in Ahmedabad session got the idea for the same from the appeal, which had put it as the first item in the programme of national revolution.

Checking up these facts by reference to the statement that Nalini made to the police on 21 December 1923, we find that he started from Berlin in the middle of September. He must have reached Colombo in the first week of October. He says he spent 6 weeks in Colombo in a hospital for an operation. He arrived in Calcutta on 23 December 1921. If this is true, it would leave him very little time to distribute the copies of the appeal well before the Congress session. But Nalini Gupta in his detailed statement to the police says not a word about having brought the manifesto for the Ahmedabad Congress for distribution. It may be that he is deliberately hiding this fact from the police and therefore giving a false date for his arrival in Calcutta. Having arrived in Colombo in October 1921, he says he spent 6 weeks in Colombo in a hospital for operation. This again may be a false statement, made to hide his movements in India on the eve of the Ahmedabad Congress. Dr Bhupen Dutta recounts in his book (ARI, p. 254) that when Nalini Gupta came to him in Berlin in the middle of 1920, he got him admitted to the hospital for an operation on his leg. Dr Dutta says Nalini told him his leg was injured by the fall of a heavy piece of iron while working in the ammunition factory in England. The treatment in England was not satisfactory and he was badly limping. If he had undergone an operation in the middle of 1920 in Berlin, it is quite unlikely that he should get himself operated upon again in Colombo just one year later. That is why we come to the conclusion that Nalini is deliberately not disclosing to the police that he brought Roy's manifesto to the Ahmedabad Congress and was instrumental in distributing it well before the session. Roy's account has to be further checked up by verifying whether the contemporary Indian press in the last week of December 1921 published extracts from the manifesto. This we have not been able to do.

8. Manifesto to the 36th Indian National Congress, Ahmedabad, 1921

You have met in a very critical moment of the history of our country to decide various questions affecting gravely the future of the national life and progress. The Indian nation today stands on the eve of a great revolution, not only political, but economic and social as well. The vast mass of humanity, which inhabits the great peninsula, has begun to move towards a certain goal; it is awakening after centuries of social stagnation resulting from economic and political oppression. The National Congress has placed itself at the head of this movement. Yours is a very difficult task, and the way before you is beset with obstacles almost insuperable and pitfalls treacherous and troublesome. The mission of leading the people of India onward to the goal of national liberation is great, and you have made this great mission your own. The National Congress is no longer a holiday gathering engaged in idle debates and futile resolution-making, it has become a political body—the leader of the movement for national liberation.

This newly acquired political importance obliges the Congress to change its philosophical background, it must cease to be a subjective body, its deliberations and decisions should be determined by the objective conditions prevailing

and not according to the notions, desires and prejudices of its leaders. It was so when the Congress, national in name only, was the political organ which expressed the opinions and aspirations of a small group of men who ruled over it. If the old Congress dominated by the Mehta-Gokhale-Bose-Banerji combination is dead and discarded from the field of pragmatic politics, it is because those men wanted to build a nation after their own image, they did not and could not take into consideration the material they had to work with, they failed to feel the pulse of the people; they knew what they thought and wanted but they did not know, neither did they care to know, what the people—the people which constituted that nation and which their Congress also pretended to represent—needed for its welfare, for its progress. The old Congress landed in political bankruptcy because it could not make the necessities of common people its own, it took for granted that its demands for administrative and fiscal reforms reflected the interests of the man in the street, the “grand old men” of the Moderate Party believed that intellect and learning were their inviolable mandates for the leadership of the nation. This lamentable subjectivism, originating from defective or total absence of understanding of the social forces that underlie and give strength to all movements, made the venerable fathers of Indian nationalism betray their own child, and it led them to their own ruin, disgrace and political death. You, leaders of the new Congress, should be careful not to make the same mistake because the same mistake will lead to the same disaster.

The programme of the Congress under the leadership of the noncooperation party is to attain swaraj within the shortest possible time. It has discarded the old impotent tactics of securing petty reforms by means of constitutional agitation. Proudly and determinedly, the Congress has raised the standard with “Swaraj within a year” written on it. Under this banner, the people of India are invited to unite, holding this banner high you exhort them to march forward till the goal is reached. This is indeed a noble cause. It is but natural that the people of India should fight for the right of ruling itself. But the function of the Congress, as leader of the nation, is not only to point out the goal, but

to lead the people step by step towards the goal. From its activities of the last year, it is apparent that the Congress understands its task and is trying to find the best way of executing it. The people must be infused with enthusiasm to fight for swaraj, they must be united in this struggle, because without union the goal will not be attained.

Why was the old Congress discredited? Because it could not make the national question a vital problem for the people. Under the old leaders, the Congress was caught in the cesspool of political pedantry and petty reformism. Not much greater results can be expected if these are to be replaced by abstract idealism and political confusion. In order to deserve the name and to be able to execute the difficult task set before it, the National Congress must not permit itself to be carried away by the sentiment and idealism of a handful of individuals however great and patriotic they may be, it must take into consideration the cold material facts, it must survey with keenness the every-day life of the people—their wants and sufferings. Ours is not a mere political game, it is a great social struggle.

The greatest problem before the 36th Congress is how to enlist the full-hearted support of the people in the national cause, how to make the ignorant masses follow the banner of swaraj. In order to solve this problem, the first thing necessary is to know what is it that ails the masses. What do they want? What is needed for improving the immediate environment of their material existence? *Because only by including the redress of their immediate grievances in its programme will the Congress be able to assume the practical leadership of the masses of the people.*

Several thousand of noisy, irresponsible students and a number of middle-class intellectuals followed by an ignorant mob momentarily incited by fanaticism cannot be the social basis of the political organ of a nation. The toiling masses in the cities, the dumb millions in the villages must be brought into the ranks of the movement if it is to be potential. How to realise this mass organisation is the vital problem before the Congress. How can the man working in the factories or labouring on the fields be convinced that national independence will put an end to his sufferings? Is

it not a fact that hundreds of thousands of workers employed in the mills and factories owned by rich Indians, not a few of whom are leaders of the national movement, live in a condition unbearable and are treated in a manner revolting? Of course by prudent people such discomfiting questions would be hushed in the name of the national cause. The argument of these politicians is "let us get rid of the foreign domination first". Such cautious political acumen may be flattering to the upper classes, *but the poor workers and peasants are hungry. If they are to be led on to fight, it must be for the betterment of their material condition.* The slogan which will correspond to the interest of the majority of the population and consequently will electrify them with enthusiasm to fight consciously is "*Land to the Peasant and Bread to the Worker*". The abstract doctrine of national self-determination leaves them passive, personal charms create enthusiasm loose and passing.

How can the Congress expect to arouse lasting popular enthusiasm in the name of the Khilafat and by demanding the revision of the treaty of Sevres? The high politics behind such slogans may be easy for the learned intellectuals to understand, but it is beyond the comprehension of the masses of Indian people who have been steeped in ignorance not only by the foreign ruler, but by our own religious and social institutions. Such propaganda, based on the questionable doctrine of utilising the ignorance of the masses in order to make them do the bidding of the Congress, cannot be expected to produce the desired result. If the masses of the Indian people are to be drawn into the struggle for national freedom, it will not be done by exploiting their ignorance. *Their consciousness must be aroused first of all. They must know what they are fighting for. And the cause for which they fight must include their immediate needs.* What does the man in the street need? The only aspiration of his life is to get two meals a day, which he hardly achieves. And such are the people who constitute 90 per cent of the nation. Therefore, it is evident that any movement not based on the interests of these masses cannot be of any lasting importance or of formidable power.

The programme of the Congress has to be denuded of all

sentimental trimmings, it should be dragged down from the heights of abstract idealism, it must talk of things indispensable for the mortal life of the common human being, it must echo the modest aspirations of the toiling masses, the object for which the Indian people will fight should not be looked for somewhere in the unknown regions of Mesopotamia or Arabia or Constantinople, it should be found in their immediate surroundings—in their huts, on the land, in the factory. Hungry mortals cannot be expected to fight indefinitely for an abstract ideal. The Congress must not always urge the people, which can be called the classical example of suffering and sacrifice personified, to suffer and sacrifice only. *The first signs of the end of their age-long suffering should be brought within their vision. They should be helped in their economic fight. The Congress can no longer defer the formulation of a definite programme of economic and social reconstruction. The formulation of such a constructive programme advocating the redress of the immediate grievances of the suffering masses, demanding the improvement of their present miserable condition, is the principal task of the 36th Congress.*

Mr Gandhi was right in declaring that "The Congress must cease to be a debating society of talented lawyers", but if it is, to be, as he prescribes in the same breath, an organ of the "merchants and manufacturers", no change will have been made in its character, in so far as the interests of the majority of the people are concerned. It will not be any more national than its predecessor. It will not meet any more dignified end, if it is to represent and defend the interest of one class, viz the merchants and manufacturers, it cannot but fail to take care of that of the common people. *The inevitable consequences of this failure will be the divorce of the Congress from the majority of the nation. The merchants and manufacturers alone cannot lead the national struggle to a successful end, neither will the intellectuals and petty shopkeepers add any appreciable strength to the movement. What is indispensable is the mass energy: the country can be free, swaraj can be realised, only with the conscious action of the masses of the people. In order to be able to execute its task, the Congress must*

know how to awaken the mass energy, how to lead the masses to the field of resolute action. But the tactics of the Congress betray its lamentable indifference to and lack of understanding of the popular interest. The Congress proposes to exploit the ignorance of the people and expects them to follow its lead blindly. This cannot happen. If the leader remains indifferent to the interests of the follower, the two will soon fall asunder. The masses are awakening, they are showing signs of vigour, they are signifying their readiness to fight for their own interest, the programme of using them as mere instruments which are to be kept in their proper place will soon prove ineffective. *If the Congress makes the mistake of becoming the political apparatus of the propertied class, it must forfeit the title to the leadership of the nation.* Unfailing social forces are constantly at work, they will make the workers and peasants conscious of their economic and social interests, and ere long the latter will develop their own political party, which will refuse to be led astray by the upper class politicians.

Noncooperation cannot unify the nation. If we dare to look the facts in the face, *it has failed.* It is bound to fail because it does not take the economic laws into consideration. The only social class in whose hand noncooperation can prove to be a powerful weapon, that is the working class, has not only been left out of the programme but the prophet of noncooperation himself declared "it is dangerous to make political use of the factory workers". So the only element which on account of its socio-economic position, could make noncooperation a success is left out. The reason is not hard to find, the defenders of the interests of the merchants and manufacturers betray unconsciously their apprehension lest wage-earners should be encouraged to question the right of exploitation conceded to the propertied class by all respectable society. *The other classes which are called upon to noncooperate, being dependent economically on the present system, cannot separate themselves from it even if it is damned as "satanic" by the highest authorities.*

Noncooperation may prove to be a suitable weapon to fight, or better said, to embarrass the foreign bureaucracy

but at best it is merely destructive. The possible end of foreign domination, in itself, is not a sufficient inducement for the people at large. They should be told in clear terms what benefit would accrue to them from the establishment of swaraj. They should be convinced that national autonomy will help them solve the problem of physical existence. Neither will empty phrases and vague promises serve the purpose, *it has to be demonstrated by the acts of the Congress that it proposes to achieve the amelioration of the people's suffering, and that it will not neglect the immediate needs of the workers in quest of abstract freedom to be realised at some future date.*

For the defence and furtherance of the interests of the native manufacturers, the programme of swadeshi and boycott is plausible. It may succeed in harming the British capitalist government, *though being based on wrong economics, the chances of its ultimate success are very problematical. But as a slogan for uniting the people under the banner of the Congress, the boycott is doomed to failure, because it does not correspond, nay it is positively contrary, to the economic condition of the vast majority of the population.* If the Congress chooses to base itself on the frantic enthusiasm for burning foreign cloth it will be building castles on a bed of quicksand. Such enthusiasm cannot last, the time will soon come when people will feel the scarcity of cloth, and as long as there will be cheap foreign cloth in the market there can be no possibility of inducing the poor to go naked rather than to buy it. The charkha has been relegated to its well deserved place in the museum, to expect that in these days of machinery it can be revived and made to supply the need of 320 millions of human beings, is purely visionary. The boycott will enlist the support of the manufacturers, *but it will never receive a dependable response from the consumers.* Then all the doctrines of purifying the soul may be good for the opulent intellectuals, but their charm for the starving millions cannot be permanent. Physical needs know no bounds, and a political movement cannot be sublimated beyond material reason and necessities. They are mistaken who say that Indian civilisation is purely spiritual and that the Indian

people are not subject to the same material laws that determine the destinies of the rest of humanity.

While for any serious or lasting purposes, the noncooperation programme cannot be said to have achieved a small part of what was expected, the 36th Congress intends to go a step further on the road of noncooperation. To their great discomfiture the leaders of the Congress observe the popular enthusiasm evoked by Khilafat agitation and noncooperation subsiding day by day. The enlisting of several lakhs of members and the raising of the Tilak Swaraj Fund cannot be accepted as a clear reflection of the popular support behind the Congress. Pessimism about the solidity of ranks and tenacity of purpose of the noncooperation demonstrations has of late been repeatedly expressed by responsible Congress leaders, both from the press and platform. To enlist his name in the Congress register and to contribute a rupee to the Swaraj Fund does not necessarily imply that a member will be ready to take active part in the struggle. In order to keep the artificially fomented popular enthusiasm alive, the leaders of the Congress have been looking for new diversions of an exciting character. But either consciously or unconsciously, they would not lay their hand on the real cause of popular discontent and develop this discontent by helping the masses acquire consciousness. Instead, another irresponsible step has been taken. Without waiting for the annual congress, the All-India Committee has sanctioned civil disobedience. But the very language of the resolution *shows that its authors themselves are in doubt as to whether it can be carried into practice any better than the other aspects of noncooperation. The resolution asks "those who could support themselves to leave the government services"*. Considering the fact that the proportion of the government employees unable to make both ends meet one day without their miserable salary is almost 90 per cent, it cannot be expected that the response to this ukase will be very imposing.

Civil disobedience when carried into practice will be some sort of a national strike. If everybody stops working, the government will be paralysed. But is the Congress certain that everybody will readily respond to its call? If it is,

then it betrays lamentable ignorance of the material condition of the people, as well as of the economic laws that determine all social forces and political actions. On leaving their civil and military occupation, thousands and thousands of people will be without any means of livelihood; is the Congress in a position to find work for them? And it should not be forgotten that the lower middle class element employed in the government departments will never stoop to manual work. The Congress leaders seem to appreciate the complexity of the situation, because, in the words of Mr Gandhi, "they are not prepared to provide employment for those soldiers who would leave the army" With the disastrous effects of the exodus of the Assam plantation workers still fresh in memory, how can it be expected that the same tactics would not be followed by the same result in the future? The political organ of a nation cannot execute its task only with popular demonstrations. Our object is not confined to bothering the government, we are struggling for freedom. It cannot be realised unless the activities of the Congress are determined by a constructive programme: unless the leadership of the Congress becomes more responsible and less demagogic.

Taken light-heartedly the resolution of civil disobedience will end in making the Congress ridiculous. Because in spite of all optimism, all enthusiasm, the Congress does not represent the interest of all the sections and classes of which the nation is composed. Much less does it advocate the material welfare of the workers and peasants who form the overwhelming majority of the nation. What is the use of speaking in high sounding language when the speeches are not backed up by action, determined and permanent? The spirit of the people cannot be raised by such impotent tactics, nor is the government terrorised. They only discredit the speaker, sooner or later. The threat of declaring "jehad" unless the Khilafat is redeemed has become too hackneyed, the deferring of the establishment of swaraj month by month fails to inspire confidence in thinking people. Why do these bombastic resolutions of the Congress never come out of the airy realm of word? Because the Congress does not determine its tactics in accordance with the play of

social forces.

It is simply deluding oneself to think that the great ferment of popular energy expressed by the strikes in cities and agrarian riots in the country is the result of the Congress, or, better said of the noncooperation agitation. No, it is neither the philippics against the "satanic western civilisation" nor the constant reiteration of the Punjab wrongs, nor the abstract formula of Khilafat that have awakened the discontent of the wretched masses, who appear to have once and for all shaken off the spirit of passive resignation. The cause of this awakening, which is the only factor that has added real vigour and a show of majesty to the national struggle, is to be looked for in their age-long economic exploitation and social slavery. The mass revolt is directed against the propertied class, irrespective of nationality. This exploitation had become intense long since but the economic crisis during the war period accentuated it. The seething discontent among the masses which broke out in open revolt on the morrow of the war was not, as the Congress would have it, because the government betrayed all its promises, but because the abnormal trade boom in the aftermath of the war intensified the economic exploitation to such an extent that the people were desperate and all bonds of patience were broken.

Newly developed industries brought hundreds and thousands of workers to the crowded cities where they were thrown into a condition altogether revolting. Sudden prosperity of the merchants and manufacturers brought in its train increased poverty and suffering for the workers. City life opened new visions to the workers, hitherto resigned to their miserable lot as ordained by providence. The inequality of wealth and comfort became too glaring, the worker got over the lethargic resignation typical of the Indian peasantry and rebelled. His revolt under such circumstances could not have been against this or that government, *it was against the brutal system that wanted to crush him to the dust.* Mass revolt is alarmingly contagious. The spirit was soon carried to the villages by various channels, and resulted in the agrarian riots, which today are spreading like wild fire all over the country. These are the development

of the social forces generated by objective conditions. *The political movement must give up the pretension of having created these forces but must bend to their action and reaction.* It is these social forces which lend potentiality and real strength to the political movement. In fact, every political movement is the outcome of the development of certain social forces.

What has the Congress done to lead the workers and peasants in their economic struggle? It has tried so far only to exploit the mass movement for its political ends. In every strike or peasant revolt the noncooperators have sacrificed the economic interest of the strikers for a political demonstration. The Congress from its intellectual, ideological and material aloofness demands swaraj and expects the masses of the population to follow-it through thick and thin. It does not hesitate to call upon the poverty-stricken workers and peasants to make all kinds of sacrifices—sacrifices which are to be made in the name of national welfare, but which contribute more to benefit the native wealthy than to harm the foreign ruler. The Congress claims the political leadership of the nation but every act betrays its ignorance or its indifference to the material interests of the majority of the people. *So long as the Congress does not show its capability and desire to make the everyday struggle of the masses its own, it will not be able to secure their steady and conscious support.* Of course it should not be forgotten that with or without the leadership of the Congress, the workers and peasants will continue their own economic and social struggle and eventually conquer what they need. They do not need so much the leadership of the Congress but the latter's political success depends entirely on the conscious support of the masses. Let not the Congress believe that it has won the unconditional leadership of the masses without having done anything to defend their material interests.

His personal character may lead the masses to worship the Mahatmaji, strikers engaged in a struggle for securing a few pice increase of wages may shout "Mahatmaji ki jai", the first fury of rebellion may lead them to do many things without any conceivable connection with what they are really fighting for; their newly aroused enthusiasm, choked

for ages by starvation, may make them burn their last piece of loin cloth; but in their sober moments what do they ask for? It is not political autonomy nor is it the redemption of the Khilafat. It is the petty but imperative necessities of everyday life that egg them on to the fight. The workers in the cities demand higher wages, shorter hours better living conditions and the poor peasantry fight for the possession of land, freedom from excessive rents and taxes, redress from the exorbitant exploitation by the landlord. They rebel against exploitation, social and economic, it does not make any difference to them to which nationality the exploiter belongs. *Such is the nature of the forces that are really and objectively revolutionary, and any change in the political administration of the country will be effected by these forces. The sooner the Congress understands this, the better.*

If the Congress aspires to assume the leadership of the masses without founding itself upon the awakening mass energy it will soon be relegated to the dead past in order to share the ignominy of its predecessor. To enlist the conscious support of the masses, it should approach them not with high politics and towering idealism but with the readiness to help them secure their immediate wants, then gradually to lead them further ahead. It is neither the Khilafat cry, nor the boycott resolution, nor the absurd doctrine of "back to Vedas with charkha in hand", nor the scheme of making the middle class intellectuals and petty shopkeepers declare a national strike, that will unite the majority of the nation behind the Congress.

Words cannot make people fight, they have to be impelled by irresistible objective forces. The oppressed, pauperised, miserable workers and peasants are bound to fight because there is no hope left for them. *The Congress must have the workers and peasants behind it, and it can win their lasting confidence only when it ceases to sacrifice them ostensibly for a higher cause, namely the so-called national interest but really for the material prosperity of the merchants and manufacturers. If the Congress would lead the revolution which is shaking India to the very foundation, let it not put its faith in mere demonstrations and*

temporary wild enthusiasm. Let it make the immediate demands of the trade unions, as summarised by the Cawnpore workers, its own demands, let it make the programme of the kisan sabhas its own programme, and the time will soon come when the Congress will not stop before any obstacle, it will not have to lament that swaraj cannot be declared on a fixed date because the people have not made enough sacrifice. It will be backed by irresistible strength of the entire people consciously fighting for their material interest. Failing to do so, with all its zeal for noncooperation, for all its determination to have the Sevres treaty revised, despite its doctrine of "soul force", the Congress will have to give in to another organisation which will grow out of the ranks of the common people with the object of fighting for their interests. If the Congress wants to have the nation behind it, let it not be blinded by the interest of a small class, let it not be guided by the unseen hand of the "merchants and manufacturers" who have replaced the "talented lawyers" in the Congress and whom the present tactics seek to install in the place of the "satanic" British.

While the Congress under the banner of noncooperation has been dissipating the revolutionary forces, a counter-revolutionary element has appeared in the field to mislead the latter. Look out! The revolutionary zeal of the workers is subsiding, as shown by the slackening of the strike movement, the trade unions are falling in the hands of reformists, adventurers and government agents, the aman sabhas are captivating the attention of the poor peasants by administering to their immediate grievances. The government knows where lies the strength of the movement, it is trying to divorce the masses from the Congress. This clever policy directed by master hands cannot be counteracted by windy phrases and sentimental appeals. Equally clever steps should be taken. *The consciousness of the masses must be awakened; that is the only way of keeping them steady in the fight.*

Fellow countrymen, a few words about Hindu-Moslem unity which has been given such a prominent place in the Congress programme. The people of India are divided by vertical lines, into innumerable sects, religions, creeds and

castes. To seek to cement these cleavages by artificial and sentimental propaganda is a hopeless task. But fortunately, and perhaps to the great discomfiture of the orthodox patriots, who believe that India is a special creation of providence, there is one mighty force that spontaneously divides all these innumerable sections horizontally into two homogeneous parts. This is the economic force, the exploitation of the disinherited by the propertied class. This force is in operation in India, and is effacing the innumerable vertical lines of social cleavage, while divorcing the two great classes further apart. The inexorable working of this force is drawing the Hindu workers and peasants closer and closer to their Moslem comrades. *This is the only agency of Hindu-Moslem unity.* Whoever will be bold enough to depend on the ruthless march of this force of social economics will not have to search frantically for pleas by which the Mussulman can be induced to respect the cow nor to make the ignorant Hindu peasant believe that the salvation of his soul and the end of his earthly misery lies in the redemption of the Khilafat or the subjugation of the Armenians by the Turks. Hindu-Moslem unity is not to be cemented by sentimentality, it is being realised practically by the development of economic forces.

Fellow countrymen, let the Congress reflect the needs of the nation and not the ambition of a small class. Let the Congress cease to engage in political gambling and vibrate in response to the social forces developing in the country. Let it prove by deeds that it wants to end foreign exploitation not to secure the monopoly to the native propertied class, but to liberate the Indian people from all exploitation—political, economic and social. Let it show that it really represents the people and can lead them in their struggle in every stage of it. Then the Congress will secure the leadership of the nation, and swaraj will be won, not on a particular day selected according to the caprice of some individuals, but by the conscious and concerted action of the masses.

MANABENDRA NATH ROY

ABANI MUKHERJI

1 December 1921

(One Year of Noncooperation, Chapter I.)

1922

Roy's "India in Transition"

In his Memoirs (Chapter 73, entitled "Marxist Interpretation of Indian History") M. N. Roy gives the background how he came to write the book *India in Transition*: "During the earlier period of my stay in Mexico, I delivered a series of lectures on India in the Theosophical Society. They were subsequently printed in a book (in Spanish) with the title *India's Past, Present and Future*. That was my first attempt to apply Marxism to the study of Indian History" (RM, p. 549), and adds "I resumed the attempt in 1921" (RM, p. 551). Roy writes: "While outlining the programme of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in India in the appeal to the Ahmedabad Congress, I felt the need of having in mind a concrete picture of contemporary Indian society" (RM, p. 551).

The material for doing this work was collected in the following manner. "A preliminary report of the latest census (1921) had also been published" and newspaper reports about it indicated that it "contained valuable information about the structure of contemporary Indian society. Through the Soviet trade delegation in London all the recent publications of the government of India, including the census report, were ordered and before long I was the proud possessor of a huge stock of blue books containing a mass of statistical material. I was in a position now to prepare a detailed report about the structure of the national economy and the class relations of contemporary India—a report which would back up my view of the nature and perspective of the Indian revolution" (RM, p. 551).

Roy writes further:

"Although Chicherin had originally asked me to write the report,"

wrote it to convince Lenin of the correctness of my view. The report had emphasised the fact that, although colonial economy tended to galvanise feudal relations, it could not altogether prevent the growth of native capitalism and the consequent rise of the bourgeoisie as an ambitious class. The established order, to some extent, thwarted their ambition. But at the same time, they had stakes in the status quo, and therefore could not lead a revolution for its subversion" (RM, p. 552).

This report which was a preliminary draft of the future book was read by other Russian leaders and later by Lenin. The former expressed the view that "it could be elaborated in a book which might have the significance of Lenin's book on the capitalist development of Russia". Lenin also "studied the report carefully and warning me against wishful interpretation of facts... advised me to elaborate it in the form of a book, which would give a realistic picture of the contemporary Indian society and open up the perspective of the Indian revolution".

The work on the preparation of the book seems to have gone on in the latter half of 1921. Roy says, "The first chapter of the book, entitled 'The Rise of the Bourgeoisie', was written entirely on the basis of statistical material collected by Abani Mukherji... In recognition to his help, I wanted his name to appear as co-author... So the book was published as by M. N. Roy with the collaboration of Abani Mukherji" (RM, p. 553).

Roy writes that, "Some of the figures quoted in the chapter of the rise of the bourgeoisie were actually wrong and before long careful readers detected the weak spots of the book. As the author, I was naturally responsible for the mistakes... After all I should have checked up the figures before using them" (RM, p. 554).

The English text of "the book was printed in Berlin but issued in the name of a fictitious publisher in Geneva". The introduction of the book is signed by M. N. Roy and is dated March 1922 in which he says that "these pages were written more than six months ago". This means the book was ready in manuscript form by October 1921, but must have come off the press some time after the middle of 1922. Roy says, a fairly large number of copies were posted singly to selected persons in India. Practically all of them reached their destination. But immediately the entry of the book into India was prohibited under the Sea Customs Act" (RM, pp. 554-55).

The Home Department papers of the Government of India record that the advertisement of the book was noticed in *The Vanguard of Indian Independence* intercepted some time in August 1922 (Note by C. Kave dated 3 September 1922). Reports of copies of the book being intercepted in Calcutta and Bombay were received soon afterwards (12 September 1922). The Government of India issued the notification prohibiting the entry of the book into India under the Sea Customs Act on 23 September 1922 (NAI-HPD, File No. 139 of 1922).

Characterising the "transition" through which India was passing in the first year of the twenties, Roy wrote in the introduction.

"India is not only struggling to free herself from the political domination of a foreign power, but she is moving ahead on the path of human progress and in doing so finds many cherished traditions of old prejudicial to this movement forward. Therefore her entire store of popular energy is in a state of revolt against everything which has so far kept her backward and still conspires to do so. This revolt, this great social upheaval, is the essence of the present transition, which marks the disappearance of the old, bankrupt socio-economic structure in order to be replaced by one which will afford the people greater facilities for progress" (p. 14).

India in Transition seems to have received considerable international recognition in those days. It was translated into Russian and German almost simultaneously and published in these languages together with its English edition. The introduction to the German edition (which was published by the Publishing House of the Communist International) is dated "Moscow, 10th August 1922". This introduction from which we quote an extract in the following, appears to foreshadow the so-called "decolonisation" thesis which was later attributed to Roy in the course of the discussions on the national and colonial questions at the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern in 1928. This concerns certain measure of industrialisation of India which the British imperialists were carrying out in the early twenties, both for the purposes of war and for drawing the Indian bourgeoisie into partnership with it and for isolating it from the national movement.

Roy puts this new policy of imperialism in the following words in his introduction to the German edition:

"The liberal bourgeoisie, which stands at the head of the national democratic movement, will not play the revolutionary role which the European bourgeoisie played in 18th and 19th centuries. The bourgeoisie in India would become a revolutionary factor only if the imperialist rulers bolt and bar its economic development. But the postwar imperialism is dependent more on finance-capitalism than on industrial capitalism. As the interest of imperialist capital demands the industrialisation of the colonial country, it is no longer possible to completely exclude the indigenous bourgeoisie from the profits of the exploitation. This economic circumstance prevents the Indian bourgeoisie from playing a revolutionary role. The preconditions for a pure bourgeois-democratic revolution do not exist in India. The national struggle is not a class struggle. The national bourgeoisie is not struggling against the old system of social production. The weak-kneed indigenous bourgeoisie prefers to enter into an alliance with its imperialist brother in return for a promise of such changes in the political and economic administration of the country as would offer it better possibilities to develop as a class. And the imperialist capital, for reasons given above, is not disinclined to guarantee such possibilities to the colonial bourgeoisie. Actually this new policy (of imperialism) is already in force, and its influence is

making itself felt in the national freedom movement. The class-split in the Indian society has come out in the open."

The essence of the "decolonisation" theory was that British imperialism's measures of industrialisation in the early twenties satisfied the sections of the Indian national bourgeoisie which were leading the national liberation movement and made them to desert and betray it. It ignored the fact that these measures were mainly in the interests of imperialism and did not cancel the basic contradiction which existed between imperialism and the indigenous bourgeoisie and its anti-imperialist role remained despite its compromising and vacillating character in the national freedom struggle. This idea is vaguely reflected in the paragraph quoted above. When Roy says, he wrote *India in Transition* "to convince Lenin of the correctness of my view", he probably meant his idea of the counter-revolutionary role of the Indian national bourgeoisie in the national freedom movement. But these questions were thoroughly discussed again at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International which put the national and colonial questions again on the agenda. Roy himself presented the main report on the Theses on the Eastern Question, which were drafted under the guidance of Lenin and which for the first time clearly put forward the slogan of a united anti-imperialist front for the national freedom movement in the colonies and semicolonies. Roy's paper, *The Vanguard of Indian Independence*, put this slogan on the masthead of the number reporting on the proceedings of the Fourth Congress.

This does not mean that Roy fully corrected his views and outlook. It appears that he reserved his opinions and they came out in the open again at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in July 1924. We have on record the following remark by Manuilsky in his concluding speech at the congress:

"Some deviations were recorded in the commission. Roy as at the Second Congress exaggerated the social movement in the colonies to the detriment of the national movement. He thinks that the year 1922 was characterised by the decomposition of the national movement. We have nevertheless witnessed the success of this movement in Turkey and in Egypt. He goes so far as to say that the national movement has lost its character of the united front of all classes of an oppressed country, that a new period was beginning in which class-struggle was becoming transported into colonies. Let us grant that in India there has been a relative development of class-struggle. But to generalise this fact to all colonies would mean to lose sense of reality" (*Inprecor*, Vol. 4, No. 57, 12 July 1924).

Rajani Palme Dutt's *Modern India* written in 1926 and also deals with this question of new imperialist policy of a certain measure of industrialisation and its effect on the role of the national bourgeoisie in the national freedom movement. R. P. Dutt's analysis (in 1926) of the economic policy of British imperialism is more cautious and he emphasises the predominating role of British capital in India as against

that of Indian capital, which it seeks to draw more and more into its train. He writes:

"...whereas before the war the value of British capital was four times Indian, after the war it was six times Indian. Thus not only is British capitalism already the predominant force, but it is actually becoming more and more the predominant force. It is significant that in the period 1921-1924, when the new policy of direct investment of British capital in companies registered in India began to gather force, there is at once a relative increase in the capital of companies registered in India.

"The conception of current capitalist development in India as a national development is a dangerous delusion. On the contrary, current capitalist development in India is in its most important aspects the key-stone of modern imperialism in India, which is drawing Indian capitalism more and more into its train" (*Modern India*, London, 1927, p. 63).

The political conclusion he draws from this is as follows:

"Thus the effect of the new imperialist policy, which skilfully plays on the identification of national interests with capitalist interests, is to lead the nationalist capitalist representatives, not only into the alley of cooperation, but actually to play into the hands of direct imperialist interests" (*ibid.*, p. 65).

In the preface to the book, Dutt defines the role of the Indian bourgeoisie in the national struggle. He no doubt emphasises "the double role" of the Indian bourgeoisie which is a recognition of its objectively anti-imperialist role. But towards the end adds that "as soon as a crisis comes and their property is endangered...they line up with the imperialists in a common counter-revolutionary front". The passage is as follows:

"But in this national struggle arises the problem of the role of the Indian bourgeoisie. The Indian bourgeoisie has played a double role. On the one hand they naturally grudge the lion's share of the imperialist exploiters and their own inferior position, and would not be averse to securing the whole spoils themselves, if that were possible, or at any rate to making use of popular agitation to secure a better bargain for themselves. On the other hand, if there is any sign of a popular movement really developing, such as would inevitably endanger also their own privileges and position, they at once draw in their horns and hasten to the side of the imperialist bourgeoisie and to its guns for protection. Thus the Indian bourgeoisie steps forward on the one hand as the true spokesmen and representatives of the national cause, calling on the people to follow them in the name of national unity and freedom and forget all class distinctions. But as soon as a crisis comes and their property is endangered, they speedily sacrifice the national cause to their class interests and line up with the imperialists in a common counter-revolutionary front. This treacherous role of the Indian bourgeoisie gives rise to the essential problem of the Indian national movement at the present point" (*ibid.*, pp. 16-17).

We have quoted R. P. Dutt's *Modern India* (1927) to show that the views expressed by M. N. Roy in *India in Transition*, especially in their sectarian aspects, became common in the International in the late twenties after Lenin's death and were generalised in well-defined sectarian slant in the Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress in July 1928.-

1. "India in Transition" (Excerpts)

(a) PREFACE TO THE GERMAN EDITION

Things are different in India which since a considerable time is subject to intensive and extensive exploitation by capital—especially by imperialist capital, but also by indigenous capital which has grown considerably in recent years. The destruction of feudalism here was not the result of a violent revolution but it was the consequence of a longstanding contact with the political and economic measures of a highly developed capitalist state. In India, in the meanwhile, a national bourgeoisie has come into existence, which had already for the last 30 years begun its historic struggle for the conquest of power and for the overthrow of foreign rule; simultaneously a proletarian class, including a giant army of landless peasants, had emerged whose number and class consciousness were growing in proportion to the rapid industrialisation of the country. Therefore, the present revolutionary movement in India is not based either on the religious fanaticism of the uneducated masses, which is rapidly losing its significance, thanks to the economic transition of the society; nor is it based on the abstract idea of community of interests of the entire people and ignores the class differentiation that is growing ever sharper, thanks,

to the development of indigenous capitalism—a force promising to be rather an ally of the imperialist power than a power working for the revolution. The liberal bourgeoisie, which stands at the head of the national democratic movement will not play the revolutionary role which the European bourgeoisie played in 18th and 19th centuries. The bourgeoisie in India would become a revolutionary factor only if the imperialist rulers bolt and bar its economic development. But the postwar imperialism is dependent more on finance-capitalism than on industrial capitalism. As the interest of imperialist capital demands the industrialisation of the colonial country, it is no longer possible to completely exclude the indigenous bourgeoisie from the profits of the exploitation. This economic circumstance prevents the Indian bourgeoisie from playing a revolutionary role. The preconditions for a pure bourgeois-democratic revolution do not exist in India. The national struggle is not a class struggle. The national bourgeoisie is not struggling against the old system of social production. The weak-kneed indigenous bourgeoisie prefers to enter into an alliance with its imperialist brother in return for a promise of such changes in the political and economic administration of the country as would offer it better possibilities to develop as a class. And the imperialist capital, for reasons given above, is not disinclined to guarantee such possibilities to the colonial bourgeoisie. Actually, this new policy (of imperialism) is already in force, and its influence is making itself felt in the national freedom movement. The class-split in the Indian society has come out in the open.

The aims of this new colonial policy are: (1) the weakening of the national freedom movement; (2) the mobilisation of the reserves for the defence of the capitalist position of the mother country. The enormous importance of these reserves is not sufficiently realised in the revolutionary camp, while our enemy is fully conscious of its significance. It is not sufficiently realised that the western European proletariat would be reduced to the level of a colonial coolie, if imperialism were to fully succeed in carrying through its new colonial policy.

In view of the feverish efforts of capitalism to expand

INDIA IN TRANSITION

By
MANABENDRA NATH ROY

With Collaboration
of Abani Mukherji

GENÈVE

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to the farthest regions of the globe, in order to overcome the disastrous effects of the imperialist war, it would be a colossal error on the part of the revolutionary proletariat if it were to pin its future hopes only on its successes in western Europe. Such an error arises from a kind of parochialism, from which the leaders of the contemporary retreat must free themselves as soon as possible.

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(b) CHAPTER I: "THE RISE OF THE BOURGEOISIE"

The more the British government makes concession to the Indian bourgeoisie, the more ambitious the latter becomes. It knows quite well that it is necessary to make compromises with the imperial capital, till the time comes when it will be in a position to openly contend for the right of monopoly of exploitation with the foreigner. But it also knows that British imperialism cannot be overthrown without the help of the masses. So to deceive the workers, whose revolutionary consciousness is steadily growing, owing to their increased poverty, which is accentuated by the concentration of wealth in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the latter has thrown open the doors of the Indian National Congress to the masses. But at the same time, by declaring the boycott of British goods for the second time, the Indian bourgeoisie shows its tendency to aggrandise itself at the cost of the people. In the Indian bourgeoisie, as well as in the masses, are to be found the objective forces making for a revolution. But these two factors are divided by class interest and this class differentiation is growing and is bound to grow wider in proportion to the further development of the Indian bourgeoisie. Both the forces are solidifying themselves in their own way; the masses in the growing number of trade unions and peasant movement, the bourgeoisie in the political movement expressed by the National Congress. The fact that the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Gandhi, succeeded in raising more than 10,000,000 rupees in three months for a national fund demonstrates the growing solidarity of the Indian bourgeoisie. The All-India Muslim League, founded in 1905 under the auspices of the government to marshal the Mussulman

capitalists and landed aristocracy in a political opposition to the Indian National Congress (originally composed of the Hindu elements of the population with a sprinkling of liberal Mussulman intellectuals), has abandoned its original role and merged itself into the national movement of the Indian bourgeoisie as a class. In short, today the latter constitutes a social class economically and politically well-knit, conscious of its historic mission. Undoubtedly, it is going to be at the vanguard of that national upheaval which will overthrow foreign rule, but the more class conscious it becomes, the more it will lose the power to deceive the masses. The more the country develops economically and industrially, under the leadership of the native capitalist class, the wider will grow the class cleavage. Therefore, to rely on the national solidarity under purely bourgeois leadership for the purpose of destroying British rule in India may not be always safe. The overthrow of the British rule will be achieved by the joint action of the bourgeoisie and the masses, but how this joint action can be consummated still remains a question. It will be easier to solve this problem when the condition of the masses is analysed, in order to understand what a great gulf divides these two revolutionary factors (pp. 40-41).

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(c) CHAPTER II: "THE CONDITION OF THE RURAL POPULATION"

The agrarian troubles are assuming such tremendous proportions that they are causing growing disquietude among the Indian bourgeoisie, which never took the agrarian problem seriously in its political reckoning. A member of the legislative assembly from Madras writes:

"If the government believes that the present taxes can be continued or that fresh taxes can be levied or that the unfortunate owner of small holdings can be ground down any further, they would be living in a fool's paradise. They would be instrumental in this country in giving impetus to the agrarian unrest which is slowly developing itself all over the peninsula."

Making due concession to the typical bourgeois nationalist psychology of throwing all the blame on the foreign ruler,

one can find in these words the recognition of the seriousness of the agrarian unrest. Now let us have the estimation of the peasant movement from another source. A member of the Punjab provincial legislative council, in his speech moving a resolution to amend the land laws, expressed the following sentiment:

"In coming to a just decision on this point we must bear in mind that a vast majority of land proprietors in Punjab possess small holdings from 3 to 10 acres. If it is true, and it is true, that these wretched proprietors are living from hand to mouth, if it is true, and it is true, that they are buried in debt up to the eyes, if it is true, and it is true, that they are generally ill-fed, ill-clothed and without any education, then I say, with all deference to the official point of view, that the land revenue administration in India generally, and in the Punjab particularly, has not succeeded. The condition of the agriculturists, labourers and cultivators is even worse, and the agrarian movement in the neighbouring provinces is not without causes. The origin of such movements as communism, nihilism and agrarian movements lies in the stomach."

So we find that the rebellious mood of the peasantry is becoming so manifest that it is causing alarm to the government and the landed aristocracy alike. Both are very much concerned in checking it. Before the imperial as well as the provincial legislative councils are being brought various measures and suggestions for the readjustment of land settlement. But since none of the parties, by virtue of their belonging to the exploiting class, is capable of striking at the root of the trouble, the situation is getting more serious and complicated.

Since 1918, the peasant movement in the north of the country has become a standing affair. Local risings and riots are very frequent and of such a serious nature that the military is often called in to cope with the situation. Appreciating the potentiality of the agrarian movement, the Indian National Congress admitted in its session of 1916 a great number of peasant delegates. But the bourgeois political movement has demonstrated its utter inability to understand as well as to lead the agrarian movement.

care to see it. The zamindars and landholders may struggle with the government to maintain their privileged position, unchanged by the new economic policy of the latter; and the government may "protect" the cultivator from the abuses committed by the zamindar, but as soon as the peasant revolts against the system that starves him to death, he finds the ranks closed in the enemy camp. Such is the social and economic position of the agricultural population of India. It stands between two classes of exploiters, viz (1) the foreign capitalists and (2) native landholder, usurer and trader. The two may disagree and struggle about the share each should have in the exploitation, but both of them are identical in their fundamental social significance—they live and thrive on the labour of the toiler, be he a worker in the factory or cultivator of the soil. (pp. 85-88)

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(d) CHAPTER III: "THE PROLETARIAT—1. HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND"

So till the closing decades of the last century, the Indian capitalist remained a ridiculous adjunct to the imperial capital. It was not until the 80s that he demanded a more dignified position. This renaissance of Indian capitalism was marked by a strong tendency towards industrialism, and brought into being a city proletariat, separated from the ranks of a proletarian nation.

In the centuries preceding the British invasion, the development of industry and the consequent expansion of trade led to the growth of towns. The proportion of the population living in urban centres in the early part of the eighteenth century was greater than in the end of the nineteenth. A large section of the urban population was engaged in trades and industries. In proportion as industries were brought under control, the number of independent craftsmen were replaced by wage-earners, complete or partial. So in the first half of the eighteenth century, there was a proletarian element in the urban population of India. But industrial capital affected India in a different way; instead of being a revolutionary social force, it pushed the country to a state

of natural economy which it had already passed beyond. In the early years of British rule, Indian towns were destroyed by the products of English machine-industry. The population of Dacca, one of the principal textile centres, diminished from 200,000 in 1770 to 90,000 in 1840. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the people living in urban centres was estimated to be 25 per cent of the entire population; at the end of the nineteenth the proportion had fallen to 15 per cent. The decadence of formerly flourishing towns occurred in all parts of the country, till new and modern cities began to be built; these did not grow up around industrial centres as happened in Europe, but on the seaboard, as a result of busy export and import trade, and inland, as administrative centres and as stations both for collecting raw materials to be exported and for bringing the imported manufactured goods within the reach of the people. Naturally, the great majority of the inhabitants of these new cities were wage-earners, but the absence of an industrial proletariat was conspicuous. The only national industry of any importance that was allowed to exist, or that could resist the attack of machine-made commodities, had to take shelter in the confines of faraway villages. The native trading class found it more profitable to sell cheap imported articles than to handle the scanty produce of the bankrupt village artisans. Thus, even handicraft industry, which had been developed to the first stages of social production as far back as the end of the seventeenth century, was again pushed back on an individual basis. The new cities of India were not the outcome of the native social progress, but were the outposts of the foreign ruler and trade-counter of the foreign bourgeoisie. But this original artificial character of theirs soon changed; their petty bourgeoisie and pigmy intellectual wage-earning population gradually grew into the most progressive class of Indian society. Out of these elements, together with the progressive landholder and country trader, arose the modern bourgeoisie. But the majority of them remained in an economic condition corresponding to that of the proletariat.

The economic and social position of the intellectual proletariat, who form a great majority of the population of most

of the modern cities, should not be passed unnoticed. In recent years, the enormous rise in the cost of living and the acute scarcity of accommodation have driven most of these intellectual workers out of the city proper to the adjacent suburbs or villages, whence they come to work in the town every day. In social standard they belong to the intelligentsia: by profession they are clerks, ministerial employees in the government offices, assistants in the large trading firms, teachers, &c. The system of modern education introduced by the British government opened the schools for all, irrespective of caste divisions. Anyone who could afford to meet the expenses sent their children to the schools. A product of these schools, the intellectual workers are recruited from all castes. Today they all belong to the same class of wage-earners, though the artificial social traditions of caste division still persist among them in so far as inter-marriage is not permitted. More than three-fourths of the intelligentsia, which constitutes 5 per cent of the total population, belong to the rank of intellectual workers. The economic condition of these people is absolutely miserable, and it is more so, considering the fact that psychologically they belong to the bourgeoisie and not to the working class. Their mode of living is that of the former; but the standard falls very short. The average income of this class of workers is 20 rupees (£2 at the present inflated rate of exchange) per month; and when the fact that each wage-earner has several dependants to support is taken into consideration, the actual rate of income goes down by many times. Their standard of living, in so far as clothes and dwelling are concerned, has to be higher than that of the manual worker; consequently in actual nutrition they are worse off than the latter. Although many of them have come up from the lower castes, thanks to the modern semieducation, the environment in which they work has developed a petty-bourgeois psychology in them. Depending on the bourgeois institutions for their means of livelihood, they are supporters of the present system of society, in spite of the fact that in the latter they can never be anything more than wage-slaves.

Till a quarter of a century ago, all that had been felt on

the surface of Indian society of the effects of modern capitalism was commerce organised on a large scale, and the bureaucratic administrative institutions which mark a capitalist state. These were the reflex of the industrial system of England. They were the integral parts of the scheme of exploitation of British industrial capital, which held India in subjugation. So the class proletarianised in India by imperialist capital was not so much the ruined and expropriated artisans, the latter, though reduced to the level of pauperised proletariat for all practical purposes, were pushed back to the land, to sink into an economic condition worse than that of the wage-earners. Capitalism, exploiting India through the media of commerce and bureaucracy, created a different kind of proletariat; this was the petty intellectual workers. The labour power of this proletarian class was less mental than muscular, since all it could sell for a starvation wage was not so much intellectual assets, as the capacity to read, write and count. The writing too was not original; what was needed was a copying machine. But this class of petty intellectual workers, though economically belonging to the category of propertyless wage-earners, socially and psychologically clung to the bourgeois customs and tradition. Their economic condition was objectively destined to make them revolutionary, but their social prejudices not only prevented the growth of revolutionary class consciousness, but actually dragged them deeper in the depths of decay and demoralisation. Still, it was from the ranks of this class of social slaves as well as from among the students that the revolutionary element in Indian nationalism arose. And when we consider the fact that 90 per cent of the students in the primary and secondary educational institutions are doomed to enter the ranks of the petty intellectual proletariat, the class contradiction in the folds of the Indian nationalist movement becomes clear. Since the class of petty intellectual workers has always been directly exploited either by the government or English employers, it is but natural that the class oppression should appear to it as foreign oppression. But this equilibrium is bound to be disturbed in proportion as the native capitalist class comes on the field to employ more and more petty,

semimanual workers. Inevitably the development of native industrialism will bring the factory-labourers to the front-lines of the revolutionary ranks, in contradistinction to the petty intellectuals, despite the latter's completely proletarianised economic condition. During the recent years, this process of reshuffling of the revolutionary forces has been going on in the Indian movement, and at the present moment it looks quite probable that class-consciousness will ere long transcend the limits of nationalist preoccupations.

The economic cleavage between the propertied and wage-earning classes of the bourgeois society is becoming wider. The poor proprietor among the intelligentsia is being expelled from the blessed realm of ownership by the process of the concentration of wealth in the hands of those who know the art of converting wealth into capital. (pp. 102-106)

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(e) CHAPTER IV: "THE PROLETARIAT (CONT)—2. PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT"

Though the first power-driven factory owned by native capital was built in Bombay in the year 1851, it was not until the 80s of the last century that the real industrialisation of the country began. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, a revolution in the movement of the population became quite marked. Several large cities had come into existence with their industrial centres, where a considerable number of workers were attracted from the villages. Since the industrial revolution in India was obstructed by a foreign agency and the normal play of social forces was disturbed, the industrial centres of modern India did not grow in the same districts where, in the early days, had flourished the towns inhabited by a rich trading and prosperous artisan class. Thus we find, that while traditionally Bengal used to be the centre of India's cotton textile industry in former days, the modern cotton industry developed in another part of the country. And in the place of the cotton industry around Calcutta, the capital of Bengal, grew the modern factories for pressing, spinning and weaving jute. Modern industrial centres with a proletarian population

began to develop since the last decades of the past century. But the native capitalists had to go through a protracted struggle with the foreign ruler before they could build modern industries to any considerable extent. Therefore during the thirty years from 1880 to 1910, the growth of modern industrial centres in India was rather slow. The number of toilers living on wages accumulated in urban centres still remained very small. Nevertheless, considerable numbers of workers had been concentrated in the factory towns of Bombay and Bengal even in the closing years of the last century. Most of these workers were unskilled, fresh from the village to which they were still bound by family ties or the fascination of a miserable piece of land, heavily encumbered with debt. The city worker of modern India did not come out of the ranks of expropriated artisans; he came mostly from the peasantry. After having lost his trade, the artisan was pushed back to the land, where he had come to stay two or three generations before the call of modern industry brought him again to the city. The normal course of industrial development was obstructed in India. Industry did not grow through the successive phases of handicraft, manufacture, small factory, mechano-facture, and then mass production. So the Indian worker has not been trained in industry. He lacks the proletarian tradition. The presence of a vast number of pauperised population in the country makes the economic condition of the industrial worker of the city very uncertain. Not having had the traditional industrial training, the factory worker of India is generally unskilled. All these factors taken together make the comparatively new industrial proletariat of India a loosely-knit mass of wage-slaves thrown suddenly into new environments, which are more pressing, more nauseating, more unbearable than their village homes, where they toiled and starved and which they have abandoned in quest of a more comfortable one but recently.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, and specially during the last half dozen years, there has been a steady influx of workers from the village to the city. This movement of population is due to the growth of modern industries. The population of old industrial cities has swell-

ed, and other urban districts have been industrialised. The working population of these industrial centres is mostly from the ranks of the poor peasantry and agricultural proletariat. The growth of the new industrial cities having been rather sudden, the housing conditions of the workers is indescribably horrible. The cost of living is much higher in the towns than in the village. The needs, however modest, of a townsman are again more than those of a villager. Thus, after coming to the city in quest of a more comfortable life, the worker becomes disillusioned. Discontent follows disillusionment. In the village he did not feel the exploitation as keenly as he does in his new environment. The struggle for life is harder and more acute in the city. Here he misses the carefreeness of rural life; and the mutual sympathy that characterises the sufferers in the isolated villages is smothered in the bustles of a commercial city. But the activity of an urban environment infuses new energy in the worker, who but a short time ago was a patient toiler on the land, accepting his hard lot as ordained by providence. This traditional passivity receives a jolt in the city. The glaring inequalities of wealth and comfort, in contradistinction with the merciless intensity of exploitation of man by man, disturbs his mental calm. The spirit of resignation, instilled in him by the teaching of religion during the ages, begins to be ruffled. He can no longer help doubting whether everything is for good, as he has been taught to believe.

(pp. 113-15)

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(f) CHAPTER V: "THE PROLETARIAT (CONT)—3. PRESENT
CONDITION AND FUTURE"

Ever since the class of city workers existed in India, the strike has not been an altogether unknown affair. But so long as the numerical strength of this class remained insignificant and the large majority of the workers were unskilled, strikes were very few and far between. Indian workers employed in modern industries were mostly unskilled until 10 or 12 years ago, and the permanent presence of a huge army of unemployed in the country constituted a standing

menace to the steadiness of the factory workers' job. Under such circumstances, the only consequence of a strike would be the summary dismissal of the strikers, who could be replaced by new men at a moment's notice and at even lower wages. Thus, although there occurred strikes of the cotton mill operatives of Bombay in the latter years of the 90s, of the railway workers in 1906, of the coalminers around the same year, of the Calcutta jute mill workers in 1907, etc., the economic struggle of the working class did not take sufficiently organised and powerful form till 1917. In this year, the war conditions had, on the one hand, given a tremendous impetus to the machine industry in India, while, on the other hand, they had pushed the cost of living several times higher. The number of workers accumulated and settled in the industrial centres had greatly increased; the proportion of skilled workmen among the Indian labourers had also increased. Owing to the sudden growth of industries, the towns were horribly congested and the housing condition was scandalous. The wages were so low that the workers could hardly buy anything with them. Such a situation could not help but creating discontent, which was first expressed in the form of food riots. Shops were looted by hungry work people. The food riots were quelled with the aid of armed forces.

Unable to drag along any longer in their unbearable existence—unorganised, practically leaderless—the workers of the textile industry found the first weapon of the class war. They instinctively learned to strike. The first strikes were declared in the latter part of 1917 and, within the course of but a few months, not less than 120,000 workers took part in the same strike, tying up simultaneously a number of factories in several towns. The demand was for higher wages and shorter hours, which were granted to a certain extent. Since then strikes followed upon strikes, and the year 1918 found the entire countryething with labour unrest. Out of the strike movement a labour organ-

The government endorsed the attitude of the employers, many of whom were Indians and not a few belonging to the nationalist movement. Recognition of the right of collective bargaining was included in the strike demands. By the middle of 1918 "participation in the control of industry" was included in the demands of several strikes.

The story of the strike wave that swept the country during the years from 1918 to 1920 is a history by itself. It needs special study; but lack of sufficient reliable material precludes our entering it at length. Suffice it to say that, side by side with the national struggle, the class struggle has also been developing. In the short space of four years, trade unionism has made great progress in India. It shows that the Indian proletariat has been very quick in understanding the necessity of its class organism to fight for economic interests. In the earlier days of the movement, when almost every strike was followed by turbulent disturbances created by the workers, the nationalist leaders suddenly found in it a very good weapon to be used for the purposes of demonstration. Very soon all the strikers were led and organised by nationalist leaders, who in their enthusiasm tried to read a political character in the economic struggle of the working class. This led to the disasters of the Punjab, Bombay and other places in 1919. But the bloody baptism under nationalist leadership did not damp the spirit of the rebellious wage slaves. What did happen was, that the failure of the bourgeois nationalist to understand the real significance of the labour unrest prevented him from leading it into the right channel. Consequently, the leadership of organised labour began to pass into the control of conservative reformists and government agents. Nevertheless, mass action still remains the backbone of the national struggle, and the masses are pushed on to the revolutionary ranks not so much by national enthusiasm, as by the instinct for self-preservation, which is the mother of the struggle for economic emancipation.

That the struggle of the proletariat is an affair distinct from the national movement and that what the Indian worker is really fighting for is freedom from his age-long economic bondage and social ostracism, can be seen fr

the innumerable strikes organised and led by the unions. Today we find hundreds of thousands of workers all over the country, fighting with grim determination the battles of economic emancipation with the capitalist class, irrespective of nationality. (pp. 136-38)

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The first stage of the proletarian struggle, which was marked by a mad wave of spontaneous strikes, followed invariably by riots and disturbances, seems to have terminated by the end of the last year. Since then, the proletarian movement has apparently entered the period of organisation and preparation for continuing the struggle with renewed vigour in the near future. Since the beginning of the present year the strike fever seems to have been on the decline. But now though the strikes are less frequent, they are better organised and are marked with the tendency of improving the immediate material conditions of the workers. In 1918 and 1919, the first years of proletarian struggle under nationalist leadership, the strikes cost the workers heavily, but very little was achieved by way of improving their material conditions. The nationalists were more interested in turning out a popular demonstration than to develop the revolutionary consciousness of the masses by participating in their struggle of everyday life; of course this defect of tactics of the nationalists is due to their affiliation which puts a class stamp upon their activities. The proletarian class must develop its own leadership and political career. Shortsighted nationalist tactics have temporarily driven the organised section of the proletariat into the control of those nonrevolutionary elements who, however, are helping to solidify the workers' ranks. The influence of this nonrevolutionary element has succeeded in curbing the strike movement and is trying to divert the proletarian energy into the channels of negotiation and conciliation with the employer. But this will simply embitter the antagonism, because the worker will come closer to the exploiter and will have more chances of seeing clearly the class line that separates them. Notwithstanding the temporary slackening of the revolutionary fervour of the working class movement, the revolutionary situation

in general has not changed very much. A note issued by the labour office states that in the province of Bombay, 6 strikes were declared in the month of April 1921, involving 103,850 persons and the loss of 184,450 working days. In May there were 11 strikes and lockouts affecting 120,290 men and causing the loss of 227,115 working days; in June the number of strikes was 10 with 16,117 men taking part and the loss of working days was 79,804. The next month showed a further decrease.

The demands put forth by the strikers of late are better thought-out than before, when the proletariat was led more by indignation, restiveness and agitation. Now the demands are calculated to further the interest of the class, immediately as well as ultimately. The fight for the recognition of the unions is still going on. In many districts, the working day has been reduced to 10 hours. Demand for participation in the profits is not infrequent. In many industrial centres, especially in Bombay, the latest demand is for universal free primary education for the children of the workers. A movement has been started for the institution of a minimum wage board and 8-hour day. In July, a resolution to that effect was moved in the legislative council, but met a united opposition from the British as well as native industrial interests and was lost. The Factory Act of 1911 has been amended in spite of the opposition from the Mill Owners' Association with slight concessions to the workers, including an 11-hour day for men, a 10-hour day for women and a 6-hour day for children. Almost in every province with a large industrial proletariat some sort of conciliation board has been appointed to settle the disputes between capital and labour. These are but signs which indicate which way the wind is blowing. The city proletariat has become a social, economic and political factor in the national life.

It is the development of large-scale industry which is going to determine the future of India. The revolution has already begun and is marching with gigantic strides, disrupting the undermined structure of the village and building huge cities, whither the hapless wage slaves are being driven by the force of circumstances. The vast masses of

wage slaves, which long since came into existence in the organism of Indian society reduced to capitalist exploitation, are in a process of concentration. The scattered forces are being mobilised into solid ranks. The consequence of this social readjustment cannot remain unfelt. In fact it is already manifesting itself very powerfully. It is the mass awakening that has at last given real potentiality to the movement for national liberation, and it is the organised, class conscious proletariat, aided by the pauperised peasantry, which will lead the national struggle to a successful end. An unconscious ignorant mob, excited by frothy sentiments, is no match for the mighty British imperialism. In spite of its rapid growth, the Indian bourgeoisie is still very weak and is bound to be unsteady in its purpose, but before the worker there is nothing but struggle. It is he, having nothing to lose but his chains, on whom ultimately depends the national freedom; but national freedom does not mean anything to him unless it brings in its train his economic and social emancipation. The national liberation of India is but a prelude to a greater thing—the social emancipation of the working class. National struggle and class struggle are going on side by side; the noisiness of the former cannot conceal the existence of the latter. (pp. 142-44)

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(g) CHAPTER VI: "POLITICAL MOVEMENT—1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND"

At the time of the British conquest, that is towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the economic and political evolution of India was such that her people could be called rather a number of nationalities inhabiting a continent than a composite national unit. It is quite possible to imagine that but for the intervention of capitalist imperialism, which while obstructing the economic growth of her people forced on them political unity, India would be today in a socio-political stage corresponding to that of modern Europe—a continent composed of a number of free nationalities in different grades of economic and social development, but not one united nation. The march of

historical events there, up till the eighteenth century, did not appear to tend towards welding the diverse and often antagonistic communities into a united national entity. (p. 150)

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(h) CHAPTER VII: "POLITICAL MOVEMENT (CONT)—
2. MODERN"

The revolt of 1857 was the first serious attempt to overthrow the British domination, but by no means could it be looked upon as a national movement. It was nothing more than the last spasm of the dying feudalism. In so far as it aimed at the overthrow of foreign domination, which had obstructed the social growth of the people, the revolt of 1857 was revolutionary, but socially it was a reactionary movement because it wanted to replace British rule by revived feudal imperialism, either of the Moghuls or the Marhattas. This objectively reactionary character was the reason of its failure. It could not have been suppressed had it been a progressive national movement led by the native bourgeoisie with advanced social ideas and political programme. But such a movement was impossible in the epoch. The necessary social elements were absent. (p. 161)

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With the suppression of the revolt of 1857, feudalism was altogether eliminated from the political domain, notwithstanding the fact that for convenience, imperialist domination still perpetuated its hollow skeleton clothed in comic pomp and grandeur. The economic backbone of the native bourgeoisie had long ago been broken. The evolution of higher means of production having been obstructed for the benefit of colonial capitalism, the overwhelming majority of the population lived in villages, steeped in ignorance and submerged in social stagnation. Politics, forms of government, national subjugation or freedom remained matters outside their concern and beyond their comprehension. The only section of the people showing any sign of life was the modern intellectuals educated in western methods and thoughts. The numerical strength of this class was infinitesi-

mal in comparison with the vast population economically suppressed, socially stagnant and politically inarticulate. Trained in the school of bourgeois liberalism and staunch believers in English constitutional traditions, these "denationalised" intellectuals were instrumental in bringing to India, for the first time in her long eventful history, political patriotism. The rise of a class educated in modern political thought marked the beginning of a movement which was to develop into a struggle for national liberation, to culminate eventually in the establishment of a centralised state embracing the various communities, united by common oppression, and represented by a native bourgeoisie strong economically and ambitious for political supremacy.

The economic development of the middle class having been impeded first by political instability and civil wars before the English government was established, and then by the capture of state power by a foreign capitalist imperialism, the modern ideology of bourgeois democracy could not evolve out of the native society. But when modern political thoughts became accessible by means of foreign education, Indian intellectuals responded to them enthusiastically. Being a bourgeois state the government of India was at first accepted by them as the best political institution. However, it was not long before they discovered the discrepancy between the theory and practice of British political philosophy, in so far as the Indian administration was concerned. Having been taught by English authorities that representative government was the noblest of the political institutions and that the world was indebted to the Anglo-Saxon race for this blessing, the Indian intellectuals found in the British government of India a total negation of the principle of popular representation. This discovery created discontent in them, their Anglicism notwithstanding. Thus was initiated the first stage of the struggle for representative government. This struggle of the radical intelligentsia was not against an effete and antiquated political institution, but for the democratisation of the existing government which, by virtue of its being controlled by the bourgeoisie, was the most advanced that the country had had till then. The ideology of this struggle

had to be, therefore, borrowed from the English bourgeoisie itself. Disciples of English schools of political philosophy and admirers of British constitutionalism, the pioneers of the Indian national movement could not question the legitimacy and authority of the government established and carried on in the name of that greatest constitutional democratic body—the British Parliament. Their contention was that the Government of India should live up to the doctrines of popular representation, the cornerstone of all bourgeois political structures.

The agitation for giving the British Government of India a representative character was obviously based on the theory of nationhood inherent in the people. A central state had been established uniting the peoples of India in one political entity, which awakened in the liberal intellectual the vision of an Indian nation desiring to be represented in the administration of its public affairs. This new nationalism was not founded on the old traditions nor cultural unity of the Indian people. It was a political conception having for its object the establishment of a bourgeois national state. The idea of the political nationhood of the people led the intellectual democrats to think that they were their popular representatives, and as such had the right to be included in the government of the country. Their former docile admiration for the British government gradually changed into criticism, "loyal opposition". Such was the origin and evolution of the political movement in the 70s and early 80s.

The intellectuals trained in modern political thoughts laid down the theoretical foundation for the nationalism which was still to come, but the dynamic cause behind the movement was the economic revival of the native middle class, after more than a hundred years of repression. (pp. 167-69)

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Although it represented the interests and expressed the grievances of the most advanced section of the Indian people, politically the Congress retained its reformist tendency. Education, constitutional convictions and, above all, instinctive class affiliation prevented the Congress leaders from

questioning the "benefits" of British rule. All they desired was that the government should become representative by including them in its organism. They could not possibly conceive of the idea of national independence, because their social position did not enable them to go to such an extent. Administrative reform to be achieved by constitutional means, therefore, remained their programme. The political ideal of the Congress in its earlier years is best typified in the following quotation from the speech made at its second annual session in 1886 by Madan Mohan Malaviya, today a radical nationalist demanding nothing less than complete self-government:

"It is not to the great British government that we should demonstrate the utility, the expediency, the necessity of representative institutions: it is surely unnecessary to say one word in support of such a cause to the British nation—the descendants of those great and brave men who fought and died to obtain for themselves, and to preserve intact for their children, these very institutions, which, taught by their example, we now crave. What is an Englishman without representative institutions? Why, not an Englishman at all, a mere sham, a base imitation, and I often wonder, when I look around our nominally English magnates, how they have the face to call themselves Englishmen, and yet deny us representative institutions, and struggle to maintain despotic ones. Representative institutions are as much a part of the true Briton as his language and literature."

This passionate admiration was, indeed, not for the British government as such, neither did it signify "denationalisation", because the man who pronounced the words is still a partisan of Hindu culture and has been one all through his long public career; it was fomented by the spontaneous enthusiasm for certain ideals held sacred by the liberal bourgeoisie of all countries. Democratic government is the political reflex of bourgeois society. Therefore it was but natural that the pioneers of the Indian bourgeoisie would hail enthusiastically the doctrines of democracy. In its earlier years, the ideal of the Congress was not a national government, but a democratic government, by which was meant that the civil administration of the coun-

try should be entrusted to the liberal intellectuals—the forebears of a new social order.

The political reformism of the Congress was unavoidable. Its leaders were the pioneers of a national renaissance. They dreamt of an India marching in the path of social progress and economic evolution under the guidance of a government infused with the spirit of bourgeois liberalism. To them, absence of British rule signified the active revival of the forces of reaction in every aspect of life, political, social and religious. Therefore radical nationalism, having for its object the subversion of the British domination, could not be the programme of the Congress, not only because it was an impossibility but such an idea could not be entertained by the liberal intellectuals. Radical or extremist nationalism in those days could not but be based on reactionary forces, whose success would entail a political retrogression to a monarchical state and the reinforcement of social and religious conservatism which such a political setback would surely bring about. The forces which would make for the overthrow of the foreign bourgeoisie without at the same time threatening a social reaction were yet in the process of evolution. The political reformism of the Congress was augmented by these revolutionary forces accumulating behind the scene. Revolutionary nationalism—nationalism which does not stand for social and political reaction—could not be evolved before the liberal bourgeoisie had acquired sufficient strength. The national liberation of India, which would put her people on the road to moral and material progress, is not to be realised by political movements with orthodox reactionary ideology. This is the mission of the progressive bourgeoisie and those spiritual pioneers of the rising progressive bourgeoisie, the liberal intellectuals assembled in the first sessions of the National Congress, heralded the birth of a new India. Historically they were revolutionaries. They rebelled against two mighty forces, viz those of social conservatism and religious superstition still dominating the Indian society, and the absolute political monopoly exercised by the foreign bourgeoisie.

(pp. 175-77)

The period that followed was apparently more revolutionary, because its guiding principle was a challenge to the authority of a foreign power ruling another nation. Even the possibility of recognising this authority, when democratised by including the available native element in it, was not admitted. But in socio-political significance this new phase was less revolutionary than the former, because its theory of "integral nationalism" when put to practice would push the country into a backward stage of development in spite of national independence. Youthful impatience and unseen forces of reactionary conservatism brought about the apparently revolutionary violent outbursts which were the characteristics of this phase of the movement. And in these very causes lay its inherent weakness. But its unmixed influence was but of short duration, because, in order to be potential, the interests of the rising industrial capital had to be made the motive force of the movement, which, nevertheless, retained its orthodox and religious phraseology.

The new movement was not only a reaction against the political impotency of the Congress. Fundamentally it embodied the revolt of the spirit of orthodoxy and conservatism against the social radicalism of the prominent Congress leaders, particularly of Ranade in Bombay and Telang in Madras. Himself a young intellectual, educated according to the so-called denationalising western methods and a disciple of Ranade, the leader of the new movement was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. (pp. 182-83)

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In short, the petit bourgeoisie found itself left out of the scheme of national advancement put forth by the rich intellectuals and capitalists assembled in the Congress which, however, had repeatedly held British exploitation responsible for the economic backwardness and bankruptcy of the Indian people. Having learned from the Congress leaders that foreign exploitation was the root of all the economic suffering of the people, the lower middle class youths revolted against the tactics of their political preceptors. The rational economic theory of the Congress that

India was poor, because she was kept in an agrarian stage in an industrial age, was not appreciated by the impatient youths, who argued that nothing could be achieved unless political autonomy was realised and that it was not to be gained by prayer and petitions. As leader of this point of view, Tilak vigorously assailed what he called the "piece-meal" policy of the Congress, and put forward his programme of "integral nationalism" which meant to say that the nationhood of the Indian people was an historically accomplished fact, and that its right to self-government was not conditional upon any preliminary evolution, either social or economic. This challenge to the older leaders rallied the discontented and rebellious lower middle class youths around Tilak. (pp. 184-85)

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The movement of national renaissance inaugurated by the Congress, which in its earlier years was but the spiritual reflection of the social forces most revolutionary at that period, threatened to be more destructive to the reactionary elements than had been the British government. The constitutional democracy or evolutionary nationalism advocated by the liberal bourgeoisie led by the intellectuals spelled doom to the old social heritage and religious orthodoxy. Orthodox nationalism was and still is more of a spontaneous reaction of the moribund old order against this progressive force, than a revolutionary struggle against foreign rule. In fact, the British government had always been rather friendly disposed towards the reactionary forces as expressed by religious orthodoxy and social conservatism, and those elements of the population which actively focused these reactionary tendencies had always been the mainstay of the foreign domination. The British government, in spite of being a bourgeois institution, patronised the reactionary tendencies because, by keeping the people ignorant on the pretext of spiritual uplift, these proved themselves greatly helpful to the former. The memorable Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and other protestations made solemnly on various occasions assured the native reactionary forces of a free hand in the field of social and religious exploitation.

This being the case, it is to be deduced that orthodox nationalism, which sought for political power in order to preserve the ancient culture and save the purity of religion, was a revolt primarily against the native forces making for the disruption of these cherished treasures of the past. And these revolutionary forces were crystallising in the Congress under radical leaders, whose programme was not to revive the India of the rishis (patriarchal sages) with its contented handicraft workers saturated with ignorance and closed in the name of religion, but to build a new society on the ruins of the old. Orthodox nationalism, in the social sense, was the resistance of the forces of reaction against the ominous radicalism of the "denationalised" intellectuals who led the Congress. The same forces, whose military explosion was the Mutiny of 1857, could be discovered behind the political theories of the orthodox nationalism of half a century later. (pp. 187-88)

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Orthodox nationalism, however, remained impotent in the field of practical politics. It thrived in the secret revolutionary societies composed of a small number of discontented middle class youths. Orthodox nationalism, which rallies all the forces of reaction under its banner, may temporarily appeal to the imagination of the ignorant people, but never can be of any permanent strength. Because the national liberation of a people from capitalist domination, such as the British government is, can be achieved only by the development of progressive forces objectively revolutionary. Modern political nationalism is a progressive movement, therefore its motive force cannot be found in religious orthodoxy and social conservatism. This social law was vindicated when the orthodox element in the national movement, subsequently organised as the extremist wing of the Congress, had to take the cue from the evolutionary radical leaders on the stage of pragmatic politics. In spite of its orthodoxy and the desire for reviving the golden days of yore, the extremist party became a political force only when it came to the conclusion that the real fight had to take place on the economic field. Aggressive

nationalists proved themselves more revolutionary than the old constitutionalist leaders when their aggressiveness was brought to bear upon the tactics, not of social reform, but of the best and most effective way to foment the growth of the native bourgeoisie. It criticised those who believed that the government would ever concede protection to Indian industries. Swadeshi (to encourage the use of indigenous articles) and boycott of foreign goods were put forward as the best means of helping the development of national industries. The evolutionary radicals, who were called moderates, accepted the programme of swadeshi and boycott which, however, proved to be premature in practice.

This doubtful tactical triumph of the extremists was gained when they recognised the necessity of giving predominance to material questions. By adopting the programme of swadeshi and boycott they repudiated their own principles and abandoned their original orthodox ideal.
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Religious nationalism of the orthodox as well as reformed school had begun to come into evidence in the province of Bengal since the first years of the twentieth century. Although its political philosopher and leader were found subsequently in the persons of Aurobindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal respectively, its fundamental ideology was conceived by a young intellectual of petit bourgeois origin. He was Narendranath Dutta, subsequently known by the religious nomenclature of Swami Vivekananda. While still a student in the University of Calcutta, Dutta felt the rebellious spirit affecting the lower middle class intellectuals. It was in the early nineties. He was moved by the sufferings of the common people. Declassed socially, possessing a keen intellect, he made a spectacular plunge into the philosophical depths of Hindu scripture and discovered in his cult of Vedantism (religious monism of the Hindus) a sort of socialistic, humanitarian religion. He decried scathingly orthodoxy in religion as well as in social customs. He was the picturesque and tremendously vigorous embodiment of the old trying to readjust itself to the new. Like

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Dutta was also a prophet of Hindu nationalism. He also was a firm believer in the cultural superiority of the Indian people, and held that on this cultural basis should be built the future Indian nation. But he was not a partisan of orthodoxy in religion: to social conservatism, he was a veritable iconoclast. He had the courageous foresight, or perhaps instinct, which convinced him that if religion was to be saved, it must be given a modern garb; if the priest was still to hold his sway over the millions of Hindu believers, he must modify his old crude ways; if the intellectual aristocracy of the fortunate few was to retain its social predominance, spiritual knowledge must be democratised. The reaction of native culture against the intrusion of western education ran wild, so to say, in the person of Vivekananda and the cult of universal religion he formulated in the name of his preceptor, Ramkrishna Paramahansa. He preached that Hinduism, not Indian nationalism, should be aggressive. His nationalism was a spiritual imperialism. He called on young India to believe in the spiritual mission of India. The following quotation from his voluminous writings and speeches can be taken as the fundamentals of his philosophy, on which was subsequently built the orthodox nationalism of the declassed young intellectuals, organised into secret societies advocating violence and terrorism for the overthrow of British rule. Vivekananda said:

"Materialism and all its miseries cannot be conquered by materialism. Armies, when they attempt to conquer armies, only multiply and make brutes of humanity... Spirituality must conquer the West. Now is the time to work for India's spiritual ideals penetrating deep into the West. We must go out. We must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. We must do it or die. The condition of Indian national life, of unashamed and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought."

This romantic vision of conquering the world by spiritual superiority electrified the young intellectuals, whose desperate economic position made them restive. Victims of the existing order, they were rebelling against it and would destroy it, if possible. The British domination stood in the

way as the root of all evils. Thus, an intelligently rebellious element, which otherwise would have been the vanguard of the exploited class in a social struggle, had to give in to national preoccupations, and contribute itself to a movement for the immediate overthrow of foreign rule, not for progress forward, but in order to go back to an imaginary golden age—the fountainhead of India's spiritual heritage. This youthful band of rebels fanatically believing in the spiritual mission of their motherland embodied in themselves the clash of two forces; that of reaction inducing them to put their nationalism on a religious basis—to hoist the banner of so-called "aggressive nationalism" which proposed to put up a determined resistance to the menaces of materialism in order to preserve the assumed superiority of their spiritual heritage; and that of revolution, driving them to political nihilism, together with tendencies towards religious or utopian socialism without, however, any appreciation of the laws of social progress. In their religiousness and wild spiritual imperialism, they embodied the reactionary social forces. Their no less sincere and ardent desire, on the other hand, to educate the people, to improve the latter's conditions, to revive the golden age unsullied by the vices of the existing system, were generated by the objectively revolutionary forces heralding a coming social struggle. Despite the apparent predominance of their religious tendencies in the ideological domain, it was the latter spirit of revolt, generated as it was by a powerful material cause, which really determined their activities and made them a power behind the extremist party. But the declassed character of the members of these secret revolutionary societies becomes clear when we see them pay but little attention to the programme of the Congress, which, whether under the leadership of the moderates or the extremists, advocated the interests of the bourgeoisie. Their declassed character enabled them to avoid falling helpless victims to the reactionary tendencies running through them. Revolutionary forces expressed through them got the upper hand.

(pp. 192-94)

dencies contained in the liberal bourgeois nationalism. The impending wane of Gandhism signifies the collapse of the reactionary forces and their total elimination from the political movement. (p. 205)

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The present awakening is a reaction against the age-long resignation, created by religious teachings and the tenets of spiritual culture. Therefore it cannot be used for a national movement tending towards the revival of the spiritual civilisation of India. Here lies the contradiction in the orthodox nationalism as expressed of late in the cult of Gandhism. It endeavours to utilise the mass energy for the *perpetuation or revival of that heritage of national culture* which has been made untenable by the awakening of this energy. The orthodox extremists in control of the Congress, freed from all moderate influence, assumed the leadership of a popular mass movement, national in appearance which contains, nevertheless, a challenge to all the fundamental doctrines of orthodox nationalism. Therefore, the intention of the present Congress, which has acquired the status of a political party, to unite the people of all classes in a struggle *for national liberation to be carried on under the banner of Gandhism*, is bound to be defeated. The signs of the impending defeat are already perceptible.

Gandhism will fall victim to its own contradictions. By Gandhism is meant the school of nationalism which has been reigning supreme in the Indian movement during the last three years. It can be put in another way: the Indian national movement, actuated by the spirit of Gandhism cannot succeed, because in that case it would defeat its own end. In spite of the pious desire of its leaders, post-British India cannot and will not become pre-British India. The Indian people will not be able to overthrow foreign domination until and unless all that is cherished by orthodox nationalists have become things of the past of venerable memory. Sanctimonious antagonism to the "satanic western civilisation", a tendency which in spite of its pathetic impotency smacks of reaction, cannot be the life of a movement whose success will be marked by the crowning

(i) CHAPTER VIII: "PRESENT SITUATION—REVIEW AND PERSPECTIVE"

The extremists, now called the noncooperators, have had better success than the moderates in drawing the masses under the influence of nationalism. But a closer study shows that it is not the demagogic methods nor the religious character attached to the nationalist campaign to which this apparent success is to be attributed. There are deeper economic reasons behind it. It is not by a better understanding of the social problem that the extremists have succeeded where the moderates failed. In fact, the reactionary tendency of orthodox extremism makes it blind to these social problems on whose radical solution depends the success of the Indian movement. The discontent and growing unrest among the masses, brought about by economic exploitation intensified during the war, was seized by the Congress under the leadership of the extremists, and turned into a popular demonstration demanding national liberation. But in spite of their religious idiosyncrasies and orthodox inclinations, the social affiliation of the extremists is identical with that of the moderates. In the spontaneous mass upheaval, they discovered the force which could be utilised for the triumph of the native bourgeoisie. But they could not develop the potentiality of the mass movement by leading it in accordance with its economic urges and social tendencies. Their tactics were to strengthen the nationalist movement by the questionable method of exploiting the ignorance of the masses. And the best way of exploiting the ignorance of the masses was to make a religion of nationalism. This tactics led to the appearance of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on the political horizon, and the temporary eclipse of all other politico-social tendencies in the shade of Gandhism, which has reached a crisis after having swept the country for two years.

In Gandhism culminate all the social tendencies that have always differentiated the two principles of Indian nationalism. In fact, Gandhism is the acutest and most desperate manifestation of the forces of reaction trying to hold their own against the objectively revolutionary ten-

dencies contained in the liberal bourgeois nationalism. The impending wane of Gandhism signifies the collapse of the reactionary forces and their total elimination from the political movement. (p. 205)

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Gandhism will fall victim to its own contradictions. By Gandhism is meant the school of nationalism which has been reigning supreme in the Indian movement during the last three years. It can be put in another way: the Indian national movement, actuated by the spirit of Gandhism cannot succeed, because in that case it would defeat its own end. In spite of the pious desire of its leaders, post-British India cannot and will not become pre-British India. The Indian people will not be able to overthrow foreign domination until and unless all that is cherished by orthodox nationalists have become things of the past of venerable memory. Sanctimonious antagonism to the "satanic western civilisation", a tendency which in spite of its pathetic impotency smacks of reaction, cannot be the life of a movement whose success will be marked by the crowning

of the native bourgeoisie, who will prove to be as disruptive as the British ruler in so far as the social and religious ideals of orthodox nationalism are concerned. The victory of Indian nationalism will be the victory of the progressive middle class, which may build a monument to the memory of the Mahatma for the valuable service he rendered them involuntarily, but which will never share his pious indignation against western civilisation, which is after all only a certain stage of social development through which every human community has to pass. This victory will be won, not through "suffering and soul force", but with blood and tears and will be maintained by blood and iron. But it must come. The introduction of "western-civilisation" so heartily hated by Gandhi is the reward of the fierce fight for national independence to which he seeks to lead the people. He is working for something which is mortally antagonistic to the reactionary forces operating through him, and whose standard-bearer he unconsciously is.

Before proceeding to review the happenings in the Indian movement since the beginning of the world war from the point of view stated above, it will be worth while to analyse Gandhism, because in it has found ample expression all the ebbing vitality contained in orthodox nationalism. The imminent collapse of Gandhism will close a romantic and exciting chapter of the Indian national movement. It will demonstrate that a socially revolutionary movement cannot be influenced by reactionary forces. It will disclose the incompatibility between the national struggle having for its object aggrandisement of the bourgeoisie and the revolt of the working masses against class exploitation—a revolt which nevertheless has contributed strength to the Congress in the last years of the activities.

Although somewhat unique in its idiosyncrasies and fanaticism, the Gandhi cult is not an innovation. Divested of the rebellious spirit and the shrewd politician in him, Tilak would resemble Gandhi in so far as religious beliefs and spiritual prejudices are concerned. But for his versatility in modern thoughts and characteristic looseness of conviction, Bepin Chandra Pal would, perchance, join the Mahatma in the passionate denunciation of everything that

adds to the material comfort of man. Had he been more of a monomaniac than a profound thinker with metaphysical preoccupations, Aurobindo Ghose would subscribe to Gandhi's philosophy, which pretends to command a rushing tide: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." In the contemporary epoch outside India, Tolstoy has been the apostle of what Gandhi professes. In fact the latter is an avowed disciple of the former. Gandhism is nothing but petty bourgeois humanitarianism hopelessly bewildered in the clashes of the staggering forces of human progress. The crocodile tears of this humanitarianism are shed ostensibly for the undeniable sufferings of the majority in capitalist society, but they are really caused by grief over the end of the old order, already destroyed or about to be so. It pines for that ancient golden age when the majority were kept in blissful ignorance in order that a few could roll in idle luxury, undisturbed by the revolt of the discontented; the spiritual culture of which was based on the barbarism of the people at large; the simplicity of which was the sign of its backwardness. This longing glance backwards is due, in some cases, to the consummate intrigues of the forces of reaction, and in others, to involuntary subordination to the influence of the same agency. Its tendency towards a sort of religious or utopian socialism proves that Gandhism, as well as its source Tolstoyism, belongs to the latter category. Or, in other words, the services rendered by it to reactions are involuntary. (pp. 237-9)

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Another epoch-making feature of the Lucknow Congress was the unconditional endorsement of its programme and demands by the All-India Moslem League simultaneously in session in the same city. This rapprochement of the two great rival, if not antagonistic communities, culminated in the so-called Congress-League scheme formulated and issued as the programme of the Indian national movement in August 1917. Self-government within the British empire, with complete fiscal autonomy, was the slogan, and the Congress in which its sister Moslem organisation was incorporated entered the period of an active political fight.

At this point it is necessary to make a retrospective study in order that the full significance of this rapprochement may be well understood. Except for one or two solitary figures, the founders of the National Congress were all non-Moslems. Orthodox nationalism was based upon aggressive Hinduism. The extremist party was born and developed as a Hindu party. It was actuated by Hindu religion; its ideology was derived from Hindu philosophy. The ruling power of the land till but a relatively short time ago, the Mussalmans, at least the upper class with the blood of the conquering race, did not consider themselves the same as the Hindu population. With their fierce fanaticism, they could not be expected to feel themselves an integral part of the Indian people, welded together by religious consciousness and cultural traditions. Then, on account of a higher grade of social development, the Hindu intellectuals responded more readily to those progressive political and social thoughts which made for the birth of modern nationalism and the eventual foundation of the Congress. When the western educated Hindu intellectuals began the agitation for representative government, the Mussulmans would not have anything to do with them. The latter looked upon the former with suspicion. The Hindus were in the majority in the bulk of the population as well as in the intellectual and propertied middle-class.* A government based upon the principles of national representation threatened to be a Hindu supremacy. Naturally the Mussulmans were not very enthusiastic over a movement fraught with such possibilities. In fact, the landed aristocracy and the comparatively few intellectuals among them were decidedly hostile to such a movement. This attitude of theirs gave the foreign ruler the opportunity of using the large Islamic community as an opposition to the nationalism of the Congress. And the imperialist government did use this weapon very cleverly and not without effect. But the blame for this lack of unity among the Hindus and Moslems is not to be laid entirely at the doors of the govern-

* According to the census of 1921, there are 70,000,000 Mohammedans out of a total population of 319,000,000.

ment, whose "divide and rule" policy could not have succeeded had there not been conflicting interests between the two communities. As soon as both communities came to have identical material interests, their union in a political movement could no longer be prevented by the cleverest artifices of the government, nor by the traditional religious antagonism.

The masses of both the communities were equally indifferent to questions political. They lived for centuries side by side in the same villages, engaged in the same occupation of toiling for the maintenance of an extravagantly luxurious ruling class.

Religious antagonism, which undoubtedly did exist, could not however interfere with the unavoidable phenomenon that the society was divided into two classes, the exploited lower class and the exploiting upper class. People professing antagonistic religions were to be found in the ranks of both classes. For convenience of exploitation, religious antagonism was kept alive among the people by the upper class of both the communities. Fanaticism fed upon ignorance made such strategy possible. But the relation between the rich propertied classes of the two communities could not be harmonious, either under the Mohammedan rule, nor afterwards. It was marked by bitter rivalry. The trading middle class flourishing in the latter days of the Moslem empire was predominantly Hindu, while the ruling Islamic community remained in the backward social stage of feudalism. The British conquest found the Moslem population generally divided into feudal landlords and peasantry. In accordance with the policy of British imperialism in its earlier days, the feudal rulers as well as the landed aristocracy were crushed politically and militarily to a state of impotency—to be preserved, petted and pampered later on. This being the case, the social basis for a liberal intelligentsia was absent in the Moslem community at the time of the British conquest, and it was long before such a social factor could come into being during the British period.

When the Hindu liberal intellectuals organised the National Congress, the few modern educated Mohammedans that existed in the country belonged exclusively to the

landed aristocracy of feudal descent. By class affiliation, these were not prone to progressive ideas, either political or social. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, an aristocratic intellectual, did the pioneer work in starting (1880) the Aligarh College, with the intention of bringing modern education within the reach of Moslem youths without tampering with the religious prejudices and susceptibilities of his reactionary community. Unlike the Hindu middle class, the Moslems were still in a stage of social development which was not conducive to the introduction of secular education. The separation of education from religion was looked upon with great apprehension and was universally opposed. Despite his progressive tendencies, Syed Ahmed Khan had to bow down before the forces of reaction still rampant in the Moslem community and compromise on an adjustment of modern secular education with theological teaching in the Aligarh College. He sought to get as many young men as possible educated in modern ways compatible with the tenets of Islam, which, reflecting the tendencies of his community, he held to be indispensable for and more conducive to the welfare of Moslem society than western civilisation. Nevertheless, he looked upon British rule as providential contact—and implicit loyalty to it was the theme of all his educational and public activities. Under his zealous patronage, Aligarh came to be the Eton of Moslem India. The intellectual centre of the rich aristocracy, its concession to modern education amply counterbalanced by a good dose of theological training, Aligarh naturally failed to produce youthful elements holding social and political ideas similar to the Hindu intellectuals who conceived of a political nationalism as expressed in the organisation of the National Congress. While the earlier generation of the Hindu modern intelligentsia became “denationalised” or, in other words, were capable of imbibing fully progressive social and political thoughts, the products of Aligarh were staunch Mussulmans above all, and implicit in their loyalty to the British government. This loyalty, however, did not speak for any special characteristic of the Moslem community. It was a natural and inevitable outcome of the social position the Moslems occupied in those days. Besides it was provoked by instinct—

tive rivalry and suspicion against a movement whose success, even partial, would mean a Hindu supremacy in Indian politics. And in those days, to the Moslem upper class of feudal origin, Hindu domination was by no means a better prospect than British rule, which was always willing to show them favouritism. The absence of a class cohesion was responsible for the political divergence between the Hindus and Moslems. Those of the former, who inaugurated the agitation for representative government and social reforms, were intellectual bourgeoisie whereas the Aligarh alumni on whom were showered the good graces of the British government, belonged to the landed aristocracy with social and political tendencies predominantly feudal. Elements so diverse socially could not unite in a national movement. The foreign ruler was not slow in finding this social divergence and communal rivalry, and made full use of them.

The Moslem intellectuals remained loyal to British rule because feudal class affiliation rendered them unresponsive to the progressive political thoughts embraced and propagated by their Hindu contemporaries. Theirs was not loyalty to British rule as such, but loyalty to a particular social order they were zealous to preserve. If they were hostile to the Congress, it was not for its alleged "seditious" character, but because it represented a tendency inimical to the social, political and religious institutions and traditions cherished as ideal by them. Their support and sympathy for British rule were not purchased, as is generally believed, by petty favouritism, but originated in the belief that British rule would provide a protection for the social order and religious institutions they desired to preserve, and which, they apprehended, would be endangered if the Hindu liberals were to be given their way. This apprehension was corroborated by the growth of orthodox nationalism, which was bigotedly Hindu in character and therefore could not be expected to be looked upon with equanimity by the Moslems. It was not governmental favouritism, but class affiliation that first kept the Moslem intellectuals away from the Congress, and subsequently arrayed against it the forces of their community. The Moslems could not take part in the national movement until there should arise in their midst

a modern bourgeoisie divorced from all feudal connection, whose economic vision would not be limited to landowning, but extended to commercial and industrial horizons.

(pp. 220-24)

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Nevertheless, the overthrow of reactionary loyalists like Aga Khan and Amir Ali from the leadership of the League brought the political movement of the Moslems closer to the Congress. The new leaders of the League were mostly young middle class intellectuals, and therefore susceptible to nationalism. Even before capturing the leadership, they had criticised the League's advocacy of community representation as detrimental 'to national solidarity'. The gradual subordination of religious orthodoxy to the political radicalism of the extremists, on the other hand, removed another cause which might have kept, and to some extent did keep, the Mussulman intellectuals away from the Congress. The growth of a capitalist bourgeoisie, socially distinguished from the aristocratic scions of the reactionary feudal landlord, made the conception of nationalism possible among the Indian Moslems. This nationalism was distinct from a politico-religious movement on behalf of an imaginary world federation of Islamic states; it was the nationalism of an integral part of the Indian people. Reactionary Moslem landlords could be the object of governmental favouritism as against progressive Hindu intellectuals; but the interests of Mussulman capitalists were as hostile as those of the Hindus to imperialist exploitation. This being the essence of the situation, the years preceding the great world war were marked by a steady closing of the ranks of the bourgeoisie, Hindu as well as Moslem, in the movement of political nationalism. In 1916, it was under the presidency of a rich merchant that the Moslem League made common cause with the Congress, which thus became the political organ of the national bourgeoisie, undivided by religious or sectional interests.

(p. 228)

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The publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform scheme forced a clear split in the ranks of the nationalists.

The majority of the moderates, though not fully satisfied by the reforms promised, accepted them as a big step forward, while the extremists declared them to be utterly inadequate and rejected them summarily... The aspirations of the capitalists and liberal intellectuals on their way to be realised even if but partially, the moderates gave up their opposition to the government. They condemned the uncompromising attitude of the extremists as imprudent and detrimental to the constructive progress of the Indian nation. The Congress of 1918 was totally deserted by the moderates. Gandhi himself, who as a member of the government commission appointed for making inquiries in connection with the agrarian troubles in Champaran, had glimpsed the volcano of discontent seething under the hitherto unruffled surface of the society, expressed a favourable opinion about reforms.

But the government was smelling trouble in the air. The first indications of an imminent mass upheaval were to be noticed in the general restiveness all over the country. It was neither from the compromising rich bourgeoisie, nor from the objectively impotent but apparently aggressive orthodox nationalism of the lower middle class intellectuals involuntarily under the influence of the forces of reaction, that the gravest danger was to be expected. Placating the moderates did not put an end to the possibility of troubles from other quarters. Prolonged economic exploitation, intensified during the war, had exhausted the traditional patience of the people, large masses of whom had been herded into the new industrial centres, where they found themselves in conditions worse than before. In the beginning of the war, several thousand workers came back from the United States of America where they had emigrated. These emigrants had experienced a higher standard of living in America; they had seen that the ordinary comforts available for the workingmen in other countries were luxuries in comparison with the miserable condition of the Indian toiler, urban as well as rural. Besides, while in America they had received political ideas of a revolutionary trend. They all came back with the intention of overthrowing the British domination. In this they had failed, since the conspiracies of

the secret revolutionary organisations were frustrated in the earlier part of the war. But these returned emigrants did more revolutionary service than to take part in an abortive insurrection. Originally they all belonged to the poor peasantry of the north, especially the Punjab. The attempt to organise insurrections being frustrated, these returned emigrants all went straight into their villages with their new vision and experiences acquired in foreign countries. It was not long before their spirit was caught by the people they came in contact with. There was another factor which rendered similar services in awakening the mass energy. More than a million Indian soldiers were sent out to different fronts where they fought side by side with Europeans. In the towns and villages of Europe they found even the poorest people living in a condition better than theirs at home. These soldiers were also coming back changed men. The imminent demobilisation would scatter these discontented and disturbing elements broadcast all over the country.

These were the potential sources of the impending danger. Discontent was no longer confined within the small middle class; it had penetrated the villages, it had rudely shaken the resignation of the masses of Indian people. This situation had not been created by the agitation of the bourgeois democrats, nor by the aggressive nationalism of the religious orthodox. It was brought about by the development of the objective forces. Therefore it could not be handled successfully merely by placating the moderates and prosecuting the extremists. At last there was the menace of a huge popular upheaval, caused essentially by economic exploitation not alone of imperial capital, but by native agencies as well, the imminent popular upheaval was a social outburst, the rise of a socially revolutionary force uncompromising, unrelenting, implacable, which would mark the commencement of the inevitable class war. (pp. 231-33)

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Consequently, the government launched upon a dual policy; it tried to combat the Indian movement with a double-edged sword. It adopted the policy of conciliation and concession, on the one hand, and brutal repression, on

the other. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms typified the former, while the latter was ominously heralded by the introduction of the Rowlatt Bill in the legislature. The apprehension of a great popular outburst, which induced the government to pass emergency legislation putting the country practically under martial law, was manifest in the following words uttered by the Viceroy in defending the Rowlatt Bill in the legislative council. He sounded the alarm saying: "...the reaction against all authority that has manifested itself in many parts of the civilised world are unlikely to leave India entirely untouched and the powers of evil are still abroad". The powers which the Viceroy had in mind were evidently discovered outside the camp of the extremists, whose following was still confined to a small section of the lower middle class. The alarm was sounded in the beginning of 1919. The echoes of the Russian revolution had been for some time reverberating upon the horizon of India; the news of the great upheaval of the European working class as expressed in the German, Hungarian and Bavarian revolutions was not altogether unknown, serious troubles were brewing among the toiling masses of Japan. There was indeed ample reason for the British government to be anxious about its position and to take precautions. The Rowlatt Bill was enacted in the face of unanimous opposition from all shades of nationalist opinion. Even the elected Indian members of the legislative council voted en bloc against it.

The agitation against the Rowlatt Bill brought Gandhi prominently into the political field. So far he had kept himself practically aloof from any noteworthy political activities. Gandhi had seen active demonstration of mass action in South Africa, where he had led the struggle of the Indian emigrants. His recent work in connection with the agrarian revolts in Champaran had also given him a good idea of mass psychology. All his accumulated experience was brought to bear upon the mass energy on the eve of an outburst in India. While the political leaders, moderates and extremists alike, were agitating against the projected coercive measures, there appeared on the scene the magnetic personality of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, an ardent

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apostle of religious nationalism and a bitter opponent of what he called the "satanic western civilisation" which was being feverishly introduced into India in the form of large capitalist industries. By inaugurating the campaign of satyagraha (passive resistance to evil), an active vent was given to the opposition, which could thus transcend the limits of mere indignation meetings and passing resolutions of protest. Devoid of any other weapons to fight the British government, the Indian people were provided in the campaign of passive resistance with a way of making their energy felt by the opponent. Gandhi postulated that the Indian people would "refuse to obey these laws and such other laws", but would at the same time "faithfully follow the truth and refrain from violence to life, person and property". With this vow a committee was organised, which replied to the enactment of the Rowlatt Bill by calling a hartal (national strike). Everybody should cease work; all shops should be closed, all business should be suspended.

For the first time in its history, the Indian national movement entered into the period of active struggle, and in doing so it had to call upon the masses of the people. A national strike cannot be carried on with any effect by the lower middle class, which too is very small in India. The time for mass action was ripe. Economic forces, together with other objective causes, had created an atmosphere in which a spontaneous response could be expected to a call for a national strike. Had this step been taken several years earlier, there would have been hardly any response. Gandhi did not think of backing up the Congress-League demands of 1916 by hartal, not even a big demonstration. Great ideas originate and are determined by the prevailing material conditions. In 1919 the state of affairs was such that the idea of a national strike could be conceived. A considerable portion of the population was in an inflammable state of mind. There had been various strikes in the industrial centres. The call for a hartal was enthusiastically responded to by the working class. It was a great mass upheaval, an essentially socio-economic, and not a mere national demonstration, that led up to the Punjab massacres culminating

in Amritsar. The powder magazine was there; Gandhi set fire to it.

This mighty mass revolt scared the moderates into the shelter of their spiritual home, under the throne of the imperial bourgeoisie. They were not slow in issuing a manifesto condemning the hartal which, apparently a demonstration against the government, was essentially a great social upheaval—the prelude to the coming class struggle. Gandhi himself appeared to have surmised instinctively the dangerous character to be eventually assumed by the mighty forces he was instrumental in invoking. Therefore from the very beginning he firmly took his stand on the ground that "truth" should be followed by "refraining from violence to property". This strong instinct of preserving property rights above all betrays the class affiliation of Gandhi, in spite of his pious outbursts against the sordid materialism of modern civilisation. His hostility to capitalist society is manifestly not revolutionary, but reactionary. He believes in the sanctity of private property, but seeks to prevent its inevitable evolution to capitalism. In the years following the industrial revolution, Great Britain was swept by a wave of anti-machine philosophy; but it was a revolutionary movement, because the attack against private property was its feature. A radical cure of that civilisation so heartily hated by Gandhi can be effected, not by returning to a backward stage of society based upon private property, but by eliminating property rights root and branch. And before being altogether eliminated, private property must go through successive stages of evolution, the highest being capitalism. Gandhi took his stand on dangerous ground. He embodies simultaneously revolution and reaction; he must perish in the fierce clash. (pp. 234-36)

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The response of the Moslem population to the Khilafat propaganda also showed that the country was undergoing a great social transformation. The bulk of the Indian Mohammedans had never been well informed of, much less interested in, Pan-Islamism which remained a fashionable cult among the reactionary intellectuals. The fact that the

declaration of jehad during the Tripoli and Balkan wars, as the entrance of Turkey into the great European conflict, had left the Moslem masses of India practically unmoved, betrayed the weakness of the assumed religious solidarity on which Pan-Islamism was based. It proved that what could be possible several hundred years ago had become untenable in the twentieth century. It was not the dismemberment of the Turkish empire that agitated the Indian Moslems in 1919, when they revolted en masse with the rest of the Indian oppressed class. Their revolt was also brought about by g very little to do with it exploitation, and above all ty relations by the growth of ctors contributed to the rebellious mood of the Indian masses, Moslems as well as Hindus. The agitation against the Rowlatt Bill and subsequently the Khilafat propaganda were successful in stirring up a tremendous popular movement, because the ground had been prepared by these fundamental socio-economic causes. (pp. 237-38)

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The present situation in India is not unique in history. It is a stage of social development marked by a sudden and rapid introduction of modern means of production, resulting in a dislocation of the status quo, economic as well as territorial, of the population. Great Britain passed through a similar epoch in the years following the Reform Bill of 1832 and leading up to the chartist movement. But the same development cannot be expected to take place in India, although similar social and political tendencies are to be noticed in the movement. The propertied middle class, which eventually dominated the situation in England as a result of the Reform Bill and the failure of the chartist movement, does not occupy an identical socio-political position in India today. The struggle of the Indian bourgeoisie is not against a government controlled by rich landed aristocracy with strong feudal traditions; it is against the highest form of capitalism in an extremely critical moment of its

existence. Consequently, there is a great possibility of compromise in this struggle.

Then, democracy, the slogan of the English middle class in the days of the Reform Bill and chartism, has lost all its illusive charms. After the bitter experience of almost a century, it stands today naked in its true character, which is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie heading towards a plutocratic imperialism. The struggle of the English bourgeoisie took place when capitalist society was in the process of building. The nationalism of India tends towards the *aggrandisement of the native bourgeoisie at a time when capitalism has gone bankrupt—when it is collapsing under its own contradictions all over the world.* In the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century, the bourgeoisie was a revolutionary factor in England as well as on the continent. It was struggling to build a new civilisation on the ruins of the old. To their great misfortune, this much cannot be said of the bourgeois nationalists of India. They have appeared too late on the scene. It is not their fault. They did not choose to be late. They were kept back by imperialism. They are late all the same, and, therefore, cannot be expected to play the same role as their kind played in other countries in more opportune times. In relation to the past and present Indian society taken as a whole, they are undoubtedly revolutionary. But they are trying to build what is crumbling the world over. They happen to be at the head of a revolutionary movement at a period when their class has ceased to be a revolutionary social force.

The Indian bourgeoisie today stands between two fires: one just beginning to break into flames still clouded with thick smoke, the other large and awe-inspiring, but its imposing glare is not that of living flames—it is of burning embers, to be soon covered with ashes. On one side is the great social upheaval fomented by the rising tide of mass energy which it endeavours to manipulate according to its own benefit and convenience; on the other side stands the imperial power intent upon maintaining its political and economic hegemony, but at the same time showing inclinations to compromise. The unbridled advance of the first, which alone can deliver a death blow to imperial domi-

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Earlier Articles in "Inprecor" on India by M. N. Roy and Others

Inprecor (i.e. **International Press Correspondence**) started publication as a biweekly journal in English, German and French from Berlin some time in October 1921. The purpose of this journal was to make the documents and reports of the Communist International and its national sections as well as the reports of the activities of the workers' and communist parties of the world in general and particularly the authentic reports of the progress and activities and life of the Soviet Union available to its readers.

Soon after the Third Congress, Lenin became conscious of the urgent need to create a centre outside the Soviet Union to collect and disseminate authentic information about the labour movement in the capitalist countries.

From Lenin's **Collected Works** (Vol. 42, pp. 333-36 and 337-39) we get the following information:

On 13 August 1921 Lenin wrote to Zinoviev on the organisation of "a bureau for properly summarising and selecting information on the international labour movement... I suggest that such a bureau be set up in Germany" (p. 333). The bureau was to collect information on "shadings and controversial issues within communism, and on the fringe of communism (Two-and-a-Half International and anarchists); and also within the trade union movement"; on the "elections and their statistics (or results) to judge the strength of trends in the labour movement"; on "the history of outstanding strikes and 'incidents' (demonstrations, actions, etc.) and so on" (p. 335).

Lenin's proposal was accepted by the ECCI on 17 August, 1921. Shortly afterwards E. Varga sent Lenin his project. On 31 August

nation, spells a serious menace to the designs of the nationalist bourgeoisie; while to enter into partnership with imperial capital is not a bad prospect. But the Indian bourgeoisie, by itself, is too weak to make the imperialist government pay heed to its demands. Therefore it must depend upon mass action for imposing its will. This is playing with fire, digging one's own grave. It has been demonstrated on various occasions during the last three years, that the mass movement cannot always be kept within the limits set according to the convenience of the bourgeoisie. Signs are already to be seen that the workers and peasants, who are steadily emerging from the first confusion of a great social upheaval, do not find the Congress and Khilafat programmes include their interests. The inevitable consequence of these tendencies is the eventual divorce of the mass movement from bourgeois leadership. In that case bourgeois nationalism will end in a compromise with imperial supremacy, and the liberation of India will be left to the political movement of the workers and peasants consciously organised and fighting on the grounds of class struggle. (pp. 239-41)

Earlier Articles in "Inprecor" on India by M. N. Roy and Others

Inprecor (i.e. International Press Correspondence) started publication as a biweekly journal in English, German and French from Berlin some time in October 1921. The purpose of this journal was to make the documents and reports of the Communist International and its national sections as well as the reports of the activities of the workers' and communist parties of the world in general and particularly the authentic reports of the progress and activities and life of the Soviet Union available to its readers.

Soon after the Third Congress, Lenin became conscious of the urgent need to create a centre outside the Soviet Union to collect and disseminate authentic information about the labour movement in the capitalist countries.

From Lenin's **Collected Works** (Vol. 42, pp. 333-36 and 337-39) we get the following information :

On 13 August 1921 Lenin wrote to Zinoviev on the organisation of "a bureau for properly summarising and selecting information on the international labour movement ... I suggest that such a bureau be set up in Germany" (p. 333). The bureau was to collect information on "shadings and controversial issues within communism, and on the fringe of communism (Two-and-a-Half International and anarchists); and also within the trade union movement"; on the "elections and their statistics (or results) to judge the strength of trends in the labour movement"; on "the history of outstanding strikes and 'incidents' (demonstrations, actions, etc.) and so on" (p. 335).

Lenin's proposal was accepted by the ECCI on 17 August, 1921. Shortly afterwards E. Varga sent Lenin his project. On 31 August

Lenin sent Varga his remarks—"Tentative Amendments or Theses" (pp. 337-39), which Varga replied the same day, mentioning the "deep-going basic differences in regard to the aims of such an Institute" (p. 573). Replying to him on 1 September, Lenin wrote: "I consider it incorrect to put the question that way (supplying information to Comintern Executive or to the labour press or to both?). We need full and truthful information. And the truth should not depend upon whom it has to serve" (p. 339). "The plan for setting up an Information Institute did not materialise" (p. 574).

However, it is probable that the preliminary machinery set up for this purpose was utilised to bring out the German, English and French editions of *Inprecor* from Berlin.

The first issue of the journal in English came out in October 1921. The early articles of M. N. Roy and other international writers were released only through the *Inprecor* since as yet there was no journal of the Communist Party of India. Roy's *Vanguard of Indian Independence* began publication from 15 May 1922.

Inprecor, as a foreign journal published by a communist agency, came up in fact under the sea customs ban of the Government of India from its very start. But its import into India came to the notice of the authorities some time in 1922. The proscription of two issues of *Inprecor* under the Press Act is publicised by the Government of India in October 1922. The two issues are Vol. II, No. 60, dated 21 July 1922 and Vol. II, No. 75, dated 1 September 1922. The former contained the article by Roy, "The Political Situation in India", and the latter the article by Evelyn Roy: "Mota Singh, the Leader of Indian Peasants". These two issues precede in the list of proscription for the year 1922 on the following communist books and pamphlets referring to India:

- (1) *India in Transition*—M. N. Roy, Geneva, 1922
- (2) *India's Problem and Its Solution*—M. N. Roy, Geneva, 1922
- (3) *Railway Union News* (Poster)—M. A. Khan, Lahore, 1922
- (4) *Railway Labour Beware of Satan* (Poster in Urdu)—M. A. Khan, Bombay, 1922
- (5) *The Communist Federal League of India* (English Pamphlet)—Printed by Mitter & Co, Chinglepet, Madras, 1922
- (6) *Vanguard of Indian Independence*, Vol. I, Issues 1 to 9—M. N. Roy, ...
- (7) *What Do We Want?*—M. N. Roy, Geneva 1922

We are quoting this from the documents of the National Archives of India (NAI-HPD, 1925, File No. 33/25). The subject mentioned on the file is: "List of books proscribed under section 12 of Indian Press Act and since its repeal under section 99A of the criminal procedure code for the period of 1920-24."

The first article to appear in *Inprecor* on India was by G. Safarov. It was taken from *Pravda*, dated 3 November 1921. It appeared in Vol. I, No. 10, dated 22 November 1921. Its last paragraphs run thus:

"The attitude of English circles can best be judged by the following excerpt from the Civil and Military Gazette of 27 August:

"The Moplah uprising should be a timely warning to Gandhi, Do not play with fire. The match, which set fire to the small pile of foreign clothing, may cause a conflagration which the tears of a whole nation may not be able to extinguish."

"This is the way a 'strong' government speaks; but it is not strong

"Together with the Indian national movement grows the labour movement in the industrial centres of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras. This labour movement is now beginning to act in the economic field. But India has millions of proletarians, and the national movement is its preparatory school."

Earlier in the course of the article the author remarks "The fight against foreign imperialism is first of all carried on for the economic and political independence of India. However, the more the masses are drawn into the movement, the more of a revolutionary agrarian character their demands assume."

The next article (Vol. 1, No. 18, 20 December 1921) is entitled "Revolutionary India". This is obviously by M N Roy, who is writing under the pseudonym of "Shramendra Karsan". It gives a picture of repression launched by the British government against the noncooperation movement. It points out that hundreds of Congress workers, men and women, are being arrested. "Congress leaders, Khilafat workers and members of Akali Dal have become special target for prosecution. Mahatma Gandhi has not been arrested yet." It says, Lord S. P. Sinha, the only Indian governor in Bihar and Orissa, who is assigned by Britain "the dirty work of arresting popular leaders... has decided to resign". It says further:

"Incarceration of prominent men like the Ali brothers, Sirdar Gurudit Singh, Chitta Ranjan Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew, Jitendra Lal Banerjee, the editors of the Allahabad Independent and many others is inciting the whole nation to abandon its pacifist principles, though the Indian National Congress urges the people to be calm and cool and to assume a nonviolent attitude. The British government may be anxious to bring about a premature revolution but the signs seem to be very clear when we know that there were riots in Bombay, strikes in Calcutta and that the Moplahs are still fighting in a perfect military fashion

"The National Volunteer Corps have been organised and the national treasury known as the Tilak Swarajya Fund established in every village and hamlet has come within the sphere of the activities of the Congress. The plan of boycotting the British cloth, schools and colleges and British courts was adopted in the last congress. As a result many national schools and universities exclusively under national control have been established. Recently it is reported that 51 per cent of the Manchester cotton mills have been closed due largely to the noncooperation movement in India."

It concludes :

"The vanguards of revolutionary India are the common workers and peasants who constitute 90 per cent of the huge population, no less than one-fifth of the whole human race. These people are not going to give their lives for abstract theories. They want land, they want bread, they want their rights. A plan of action is, therefore, being mapped so that the real revolutionaries may know how to use their forces for the inevitable social and economic revolution, which is bound up with the political revolution.

"Now is the auspicious moment for all the peoples of the world to study the significance of India's fight for complete independence. They may find that India may bring about the collapse of the imperialistic-capitalistic system. India's movement cannot but be a movement of the masses for the masses. The privileged and propertied classes are enjoying the blessings of life under the British and many of them have been created by the British government. It is the common people who are suffering and it is they who will lead the movement to success. The recognition of these facts may throw a new light on what part India may play in the adjustment of the world's economic, social and political order."

This article written on the eve of the Ahmedabad session of the National Congress (December end 1921) reiterates the ideas put forward in the Ahmedabad manifesto issued by M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji which we have already given.

The first article in *Inprecor* (Vol. II, No. 1, 3 January 1922) is the one by Roy on "The Indian Trade Union Congress". It is devoted to the second session of the AITUC held in Jharia at the end of 1921. It gives some more facts of that session not mentioned in our documents of 1921. For instance this article states :

"Before the congress met, a strike of miners had been on. The mineowners called upon the government to prohibit the holding of the congress. They even went so far as to suggest the dissolution of the congress with the help of military forces. But the government busy in the campaign of repression against the National Congress did not think it prudent to pay heed to the mineowners' request."

After describing how striking miners in their hundreds were always lingering round the congress hall and how some of their leaders went up to the platform of the congress and recounted their conditions to their delegates, the article writes :

"The miners' leader Viswanath, who in company with a number of other trade union leaders including the president-elect, Joseph Baptista had made a tour of inspection of the mining districts, made the following pronouncement :

"If the present misery of the workers of India is allowed to continue, then nothing can stop Bolshevism. Let them take heed, because the workers are determined to become the rightful owners of the wealth produced by their labours'. According to the report submitted at the

congress the average wage of the miners was six pence per day (six annas!). Starvation was raging among the workers."

It further adds:

"One of the most interesting features of the congress was that the same Mineowners' Association which asked the government to break up the congress ended by requesting a hearing before the assembly of the organised workers. Permission to speak before the congress was granted to the president of the association who declared the intention of reducing the working week to 44 hours, and invited the representatives of the striking miners to open immediate negotiations. Promises were made in the name of the owners that decent houses would be built and schools provided for the workers' children. Still more, a deputation from the owners publicly apologised for having attempted to suppress the congress and presented a resolution condemning their own action. This incident shows the strength acquired by the organised workers of India in the short period of their activity."

Finally it mentions that "Two resolutions were unanimously passed: one appeals to the workers of the world to secure peace and bread for Russia" and the second declaring that "wars can be avoided only by the united efforts of the working class of the world". More than 100 unions with a total membership of 1,500,000 were represented in the congress.

In another article in the beginning of 1922 Roy (Shramendra Karsan) again reverts to the subject of "The Revolt of Labour in India" (Vol. II No. 12, 14 February 1922). The article reviews the contemporary manifestations of peasants' and workers' spontaneous movement. It says:

"Indian labour may be illiterate, but not necessarily unintelligent. It at least understands its economic interests, if not its rights. Indian labour sees that fifty per cent of the industries and nearly all the plantations are controlled by the British. It is inveigled into slavery on the British plantation colonies. They feel in every moment the lash of the exploiters. Torture and stomach pangs are enough to awaken them to class consciousness."

"The beginning has been made in organising unions in every field of labour. For the last two years, All-India Trade Union Congress sessions

* NAI-HPD, File No. 103 of 1923, Part III, series 1-36, Bolshevik Propaganda in India, mentions on p. 23 in appendix I to Notes, that two stowaway German sailors Tosche and Fleishner by name arrived in Calcutta on 19 July 1921. They were deported to Shanghai. After their deportation it was found that they delivered letters to the secretary of the miners' federation in Jharia from Russia. This might be one of the sources from which the news of famine in Russia and the call of the RILU to collect money for the relief of the starving in Russia may have first reached India. The same document further states that "information was received that a letter from the Jharia TUC session was sent to Zinoviev in Russia".

have been held to direct the forces of labour and to map out the programme of action. The last session was held at Jharia in the coalmine districts of Bihar.

"Indian labour has shown its intelligence in organising strikes and in effectively using sabotage. The strikes of the textile workers, coal-miners, dockyard workers, tramway conductors and motormen, plantation workers and jute millhands have been admirably carried out in many cases, and they have used this weapon no less creditably than their comrades in Europe. The strike not only unites the labourers for their economic ends, but it also serves political purposes. The labourers gain their increase in wages and at once realise their potential strength in forming unions. When a strike breaks out in Bombay, Madras or Calcutta, the British government sends out militia to suppress the labourers, and use the soldiers as strike-breakers. When the postmen in Calcutta refused to work unless their demands for higher wages were granted, a number of the leading postmen were imprisoned by the British court. When the workers on the Assam tea plantations revolted against their heinous criminal treatment by the tea planters, the British government supported the planters and no railroad was allowed to carry the workers to a place of safety. On the other hand the political workers and volunteers helped them in every possible way."

Emphasising further the political significance and role of the organised working class movement in the struggle for independence of the country the article says -

"It is a happy augury for India that labourers are taking a leading part in the political movement. For it is they who will make India free. Mahatma Gandhi, 'professor of pacifistology', has been able to become the leading figure in India today due to the masses' confidence in him. The moment he betrays them in the attainment of their political-economic and social aspirations he will at once lose his influence over them. Beneath the political agitation is concealed the weapon of labour, which will be used at the opportune moment for the emancipation of the masses."

"The study of Indian labour problems then suggests that if the principal object of the labour movements in the world today be collective bargaining with the capitalists then their only recourse is a 'molly-coddling' method to force arbitration. But if labour is conscious of the fact that it produces all wealth and it should dictate the methods of distribution, then there can be no other way to establish the principle but the seizure of the control of the government. The government in such cases will undoubtedly be controlled by the majority which is the labouring masses. That is what the revolt of labour in India means. This is its positive, real and full meaning. And as the cause of labour is one, its international significance is quite evident."

This is followed by one more article by Roy (Shramendra Karsan) entitled "The Political Crisis in India" (Vol. II, 17 March 1922). It gives

an analysis of the political situation in the early months of 1922. This we are reproducing in the full in the following pages.

The next article "The Awakening in India" by Evelyn Roy continues the same theme forward—viz the situation after the arrest of Gandhiji. It is in Vol II, No. 32-33, dated 5 May 1922. We reproduce the concluding portions of this article

We also reproduce a brief resolution "On the Orient Question" adopted by the Plenum of the ECCI on 4 March 1922. This is a directive—one of the earliest—to the communist parties in West European countries to support the national revolutionary movements in the colonial countries of the Near East and Central Asia, and especially in Egypt and India, with which they are connected: "The Communist Party of England is especially requested to launch a well-organised and continued action with a view of supporting the revolutionary movement in India and Egypt"

This list exhausts the articles and material appearing in the early issues of *Inprecor* in 1921 and in the beginning of 1922, i.e. before the first journal of M. N. Roy and later of the Communist Party of India, viz *Vanguard of Indian Independence*, began publication from abroad from 15 May 1922.

2. "Inprecor" Articles

(a) THE POLITICAL CRISIS IN INDIA—BY SHRAMENDRA KARSAN

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the noncooperation movement in India, has been arrested by the British government at Sabarmati, four miles from Ahmedabad on March 10, 1922. This bit of news given out by the London India Office brings home to us the realisation that the curtain for the final climax in the political crisis in India has been lifted. The arrest of Gandhi is a direct and determined challenge of the British government, which desires to test the strength of the Indian people. The conjecture may not be unfounded that the British cabinet after mature deliberations gave the secret order to the British officials in India to curb the freedom of the moving spirit in Indian politics. They argued perhaps that the desire to fight for complete independence of India is confined only to a few men. Already the most prominent leaders like the Ali brothers, Chitta Ranjan Das, Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai, Abul Kalam Azad and hundreds of others have been imprisoned by the British government. At the time of the arrest of the Ali brothers the government was very apprehensive about the outbreak of the revolution. It was Gandhi who pleaded with the

violent revolutionaries to give him an opportunity of making an experiment in his peaceful revolution. The elimination of Gandhi from the arena of active Indian politics then suggests many possibilities.

On the eve of the arrest of Gandhi, Montagu, the British Secretary of State, has been forced to resign. Montagu acted, it is intimated, in publishing a dispatch of the Viceroy in a manner which defied the British cabinet. It is, of course, the explanation for the consumption of those who play with political phrases. But the significance of Montagu's resignation has to be sought elsewhere. The foreign office of the British government is the most autocratic and centralised department in the world, and its direction has remained in the hands of those few persons who are trained in the art of aggression and exploitation. There is not a single political party—Labour or Liberal—which has ever questioned the divinity of the British Foreign Office. Montagu published the dispatch of Lord Reading, not because he had any secret sympathy with the aspirations of the Indian people, but because he, being at the helm of the government, understands that the British rule in India is in peril. And he wanted to let the world know. Lloyd George himself declared some time ago in the British Parliament, in order to satisfy the Unionists, that iron hand must be used in India and the Indian people must not question the sovereignty of the parasitic king. The difference between Montagu and Lloyd George is that the former sees that the passing away of British rule in India is imminent unless some sort of understanding is made with the Indian people by satisfying certain immediate grievances while the latter aims to become the champion of civilisation by crushing the Indian people by force of arms, which have been strengthened at the expense of Germany. Both are enemies of the freedom of India and friends of English imperialism.

The dispatch which Montagu published is a clever plan to work out the old policy of divide et impera. It states that the British government in India urges among other things:

- (1) The evacuation of Constantinople,

- (2) The suzerainty of the Sultan over the holy places,
- (3) The restoration of Ottoman Thrace (including Adrianople) and Smyrna.

The fulfilment of these three points is of the greatest importance to India, it added. In other words Lord Reading, the British Viceroy, and Montagu are of the opinion that the settlement of the Khilafat question will alienate the Mohammedans from the independence movement in India.

These intellectually bankrupt statesmen and their advisers fail to recognise that the Amritsar massacre and the Khilafat are not the most important questions in Indian politics to-day. One needs to be acquainted with the spirit that was displayed in the Indian National Congress, held in December last.

Hasrat Mohani, a very influential leader, moved a resolution at the congress advocating complete independence of India and the establishment of a republic. The methods he desired to adopt were regular warfare with the British military forces. Despite the fact that many intelligent leading men were prevented from attending the congress owing to their imprisonment, Mohani was supported by the considerable number of delegates. The failure to pass the resolution did not mean the reluctance of the Indian people to fight the British in the battlefield. It simply proved that a little more time was needed to perfect the plans, Mohani spoke out the minds of the revolutionaries who are convinced that the British will never leave the soil of India until they are compelled to do so by force.

As the situation is being developed in that direction, and the day for final reckoning is approaching, Lloyd George is exercising all the faculties of his foxy trickeries. It has been his policy to make a settlement with Ireland before the Indian situation becomes critical. He could then use some of the Irish to do Britain's dirty work in fighting the Indian revolutionaries.

He also expected to do the same trick in Afghanistan, Egypt and Mesopotamia. Though Afghanistan has made a treaty with England, the Afghans have made it very clear that their friendship does not mean hostility to India.

Independence of India, they recognise, will alone stop the sinister intrigues of the British Asia affairs. Freedom of India will be a blessing to the neighbouring states.

The puppet princes of Hedjaz and Mesopotamia are financed and maintained by Lloyd George's government in order that the people of those territories do not rise in revolt and thus help the cause of the Indian revolutionaries. Moreover, the troops which are being used in these places may be withdrawn for use in India.

The recent declaration of the withdrawal of British suzerainty in Egypt has convinced the Egyptians of the hypocrisy and fraud of the British imperialists. One of the safeguards which the British want to maintain is the control of the Suez Canal so that the dispatch of the British troops to India is not hampered.

British imperial policy is entirely centred on India. Lloyd George and his British government's moves must be studied from this standpoint. In so far as the Indian policy is concerned, he is supported by his constituencies. No one in England, with the exception of the communists, desires to let India have her complete emancipation.

To alienate the sympathy of the Moslem world towards India has been a kind of pastime of the British politicians in season and out of season.

Gandhi has been the leading figure in India. The elimination of Gandhi from the actual field of activities will at once convince the Indian people that the principle of pacifism is not workable as long as the germ of imperialism and exploitation is lodged in the lungs of world politics. The revolutionaries who kept absolutely silent, as they did not wish to hamper the work of Gandhi, will now be able to assert that the only thing the British respect is the mailed fist.

There is no party in India which does not resent the arrest of Gandhi. There are abundant evidence to prove that even the moderates are becoming restive, particularly when they see the stupendous military expenditures. Dr Gour, for instance, vehemently attacked the policy of Lord Rawlinson, commander-in-chief. Rawlinson urges the so-called

- (2) The suzerainty of the Sultan over the holy places,
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Indian legislature to acquiesce in the expenditure of nearly 50 per cent of the entire revenue for military purposes. No sane-minded Indian can advocate such a pernicious policy. Of course, the government will spend the money without any consideration whatever for Indian public opinion.

The British government has already dispatched several regiments of British troops to India, as they no longer trust the Indian soldiers. How far the Indian people is organised militarily can only be guessed from the various symptoms. Not long ago the Moplahs have fought very bravely, without any assistance from outside. Nearly a month ago the peasants in Chauri Chaura Thana, in the district of Rae Bareilly in the United Provinces, attacked the police and killed several of them. The heroic Sikhs of the Punjab are well organised and openly known as the Akali Dal. In their official organ, the *Akali Azad*, they have plainly repudiated the sophisticated claim of sovereignty of the British crown. The Sikhs are brave and well versed in the arts of modern military science.

In the Guntur district, Madras, the people are not paying any taxes to the government. Their slogan is no taxation to a government which is not their own. The consequences which follow from the refusal to pay taxes are not unknown to them. They are most assuredly prepared to fight the issue out.

The capacity of the Indians to organise their forces has been proven on several occasions. Even English newspapers like the *Statesman*, published in Calcutta for the interests of the English government in India, admit the strength of the organised forces which are working for the emancipation of India. It states in its issue of November 18th, 1921: "To be perfectly frank, it must be admitted that the Indian city of Calcutta spent yesterday (November 17th, 1921) under the Gandhi-raj." That is, the control of the city remained in the hands of the Indian people under the leadership of Gandhi. It was not only one city or one hamlet, the entire country was under the control of Gandhi and the noncooperators on the day of arrival of the Prince of Wales.

The real situation in India is this: the movement has

passed into the hands of the common people who are the backbone of society. A Congress proclamation pointed out: "Clerks, lawyers and students may attend to their normal business, but the people, the real people of India, who are with the movement, will refrain from work" (*London Daily Telegraph*, 30 December 1921).

It gives a clue to the understanding of the heart of the Indian movement. It is not an exaggeration to say that the movements in India are directly and indirectly controlled by the labouring masses. And the moment the masses take a thing in their own hands, they give it the finishing touch.

The English newspaper, the *Statesman*, should therefore not be surprised that "there was little evidence of the existence of British rule".

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, an Indian paper, in its issue on November 18th, 1921, truly says, "We do not expect that anything will open the eyes of the bureaucracy or Viceroy. But writ large on the hartal of Calcutta is—Revolution".

It goes on to say that the "nation has transferred its willing allegiance from British rule to its truly representative body, the National Congress".

These are the indications which may help us to see the effect of the arrest of Gandhi on future political developments in India.

The Indian labouring masses are awakened. They realise their potential strength. The revolutionaries who have followed the policy of watchful waiting will be forced to activity. Undoubtedly the British government is inciting other people to bring about premature revolution, but the Indian people who have to depend on their own resources and strength will know when to strike. Gandhi may come and Gandhi may go, but the revolutionaries are marching on. India is determined not only to make herself free but also to destroy the hegemony of the British empire so that the millions of the toiling masses may breathe freely—economically, politically and socially. The arrest of Gandhi looms large as a signal for coming startling events in the arena of Indian politics.

(b) RESOLUTION ON THE ORIENT QUESTION

1. Owing to the great importance of the national revolutionary movements, which are developing more and more in the colonial countries of the Near East and Central Asia, and especially in Egypt and in India, the plenum of the Executive proposes to the parties of those countries which are in connection with the aforementioned to organise a systematic campaign for the liberation of the colonies in the press, in Parliament and among the masses. The Communist Party of England is especially requested to launch a well-organised and continued action with a view of supporting the revolutionary movement in India and Egypt.

2. The three parties which are connected the North Africa, Asia Minor and India, the communist parties of France, Italy, and England should follow the example set by the French party and establish special colonial commissions attached to their executive committees in order systematically to collect information on colonial matters, establish connections with the revolutionary organisations in the colonial countries and realise close contact with them. The Balkan Communist Federation undertakes to deal especially with the organisations of the communist movement in Turkey.

3. The Executive Committee proposes to all parties that they utilise all possibilities for the publication of communist literature in the languages of the colonies and thus create close connection with the suppressed masses there.

(Vol II, No. 29, 2 May 1922)

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(c) EXCERPTS FROM "THE AWAKENING OF INDIA"
—BY EVELYN ROY

Nevertheless, the arrest of Gandhi marks a temporary setback to the progress of the revolution in India. However badly, he has steered the unwieldy mass of Indian energy and opinion into one broad channel of ceaseless agitation against the existing system during the last two years. If his leadership was confused, it was because the movement itself was a chaos which bred confusion; though he has made

blunders of first magnitude, he at the same time groped a way for the people out of the blind alley of political stagnation and government repression into the roaring tide of a national upheaval. The Indian movement is ready for a new leader because it is becoming every day more clarified, its inherent contradictions are becoming palpable even to its component parts, but this very clarification spells disintegration, unless some new leaders are hurled into the breach. The more conservative rightwing of moderate Indian opinion is growing tired of the political handsprings of Gandhi and his followers. The extreme leftwing, whose body consists of Indian labour, has seen its forces uselessly spent in a hopeless political contest with the bureaucracy for a swaraj constantly postponed. In every affray with the armed forces of the government, it has come off worsted, its best elements lie in jail. It, too, grows tired of political rope-dancing, and will break away, unless some tangible economic programme is advanced by the Congress leaders to rally labour in earnest to their cause. Like the chartist movement in England, which its Indian prototype in many ways resembles, what began as a great mass movement towards political, social and economic revolution may end as a mediocre struggle of the disheartened workers to win, within the bounds of legalised trade unionism, the right to a full meal a day and an old-age pension when capitalism shall throw them on the scrapheap.

May there soon arise from the ranks of Indian labour, or from the intellectual proletariat at war with foreign rule, a class conscious Gandhi who will crystallise the political confusion that reigns in the Indian movement by formulating a clear and definite programme based upon the needs and aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people by boldly raising the standard of the working class, and by declaring that only through the energy and lives of the Indian proletariat and peasantry can swaraj ever be attained.

“The Vanguard of Indian Independence”

By March and April 1922 M N Roy's *India in Transition* was already in press. After the manifesto to the Ahmedabad congress, which was signed by him and Abani Mukherji, Roy has written several articles on Indian situation in the newly started *Inprecor* which we have reviewed in the foregoing. It was now necessary to start a regularly appearing journal, to begin with, printed from abroad which would give a scientific and revolutionary orientation to the militant left-wing elements in the national liberation movement, to turn their attention to the organisation of workers, peasants and the toiling masses, and to the formation of a revolutionary party based on these classes, which would fight within the forum of the national movement for a militant programme of action and for the aim of achieving the complete independence of the country based on the anti-imperialist and antifeudal democratic demands of the masses.

Dr Bhupendranath Dutta mentions that Roy arrived in Berlin in the spring of 1922 and started the *Vanguard*. He says he learned from his Bolshevik friends that Roy was receiving a quarterly grant specially earmarked for this paper. The first issue was published on 15 May 1922. The *Vanguard of Indian Independence* was a fortnightly. Its first nine issues were published up to 15 September 1922.

According to Cecil Kaye, the British Director of Intelligence Bureau, first copies of the *Vanguard* were intercepted in India in early June 1922 (*Communism in India*, 1926, p. 14). The same source says that *Vanguard* influenced a number of leftwing papers appearing in 1922, e.g. *Almashakil* (Bengal), *Navayugam* (Telugu) of G V Krishna Rao appearing from Madras, *Dhumketu* (Bengal), *Deshar Bani* (Noakhali),

Vartaman (Kanpur) and Socialist of S A Dange from Bombay appearing from August 1922 Kaye also says that the leading article of Vanguard, No. 7 dated 15 August 1922, appeared in the Amrita Bazar Patrika "in a slight paraphrase". He also says that a manifesto entitled "Communist Federal League of India" issued by Nilkantha Iyer, which was banned by the government in 1922, was also a result of the Vanguard.

It is no wonder therefore that Vanguard and all its nine issues were banned in September-October 1922 under section 99A of the Criminal Procedure Code. This means that it was not only prevented from entering India under the Sea Customs Act but was also proscribed, making its possession a criminal offence (NAI-HPD, 1925, File No 33/25, gives a list of proscribed booklets for the period of 1920-24).

The contents of the first nine issues will be briefly summarised to give the reader an idea of the general coverage of the journal before we reproduce some of its important articles

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 1, 15 May 1922

Editorial: "Our Object"—In this the Vanguard declares its objective. This we are giving in full in the following Its last sentences are significant: "In short, we are entering a new phase in our struggle for freedom We will no longer grope in the dark We will no longer exhort the hungry people to suffer for some visionary swaraj to be attained by soul-force* purified in the fire of poverty. Although it will be stupid to talk of premature violence, we are, nevertheless, of the opinion that nonviolent revolution is an impossibility. The Indian masses—the workers organised in trade unions, the peasants forming their own fighting organs in the form of Akali Dal,* kisan sabhas, aikya sabhas, etc—call for a realistic orientation in our political struggle To help the formation of this much needed realist orientation is the object of the Vanguard."

Notes: "Economic Basis of Politics" (quotes from the famous Bardoli resolution, asking ryots to pay rents to zamindars); "EIR Strike"

Articles: Extract from India In Transition ("Social Foundations of Gandhism"); "Gandhi—an Analysis", Part I, by Santi Devi (Evelyn Roy).

Press Review: "Geneva—Another Illusion Gone "News from India" (EI Railway workers' strike; report of a Bhil revolt in native states situated in the Bombay Presidency for abolition of begar, report is dated Bombay. No names of states mentioned—government communique quoted).

* The mention of "Akali Dal" together with kisan sabhas and aikya (Eka) sabhas of UP is a mistake based on imperfect information at the time. Akali Dal, though having peasant base, was not a class organisation of the peasants and tenants fighting against landlord oppression, but an organisation of Sikh masses fighting for the liberation and democratisation of the gurdwaras.

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 2, 1 June 1922

Editorial: "Constructive Programme".

Notes and Comments: "A Frank Talk" (a comment on J. M. Sen Gupta's speech where he says mass rising everywhere leads to chaos—therefore follow Gandhi); "A New Turn" (Mrs C. R. Das advises the organisation of workers and peasants); "Backing the Wrong Horse" (17 lakhs for charkha but no aid to the EIR workers' strike—which failed); "Our Foreign Policy", "Crisis in the Congress"—by M. N. Roy.

Press Review: "Home and Abroad"; "Geneva Conference"; "Bengal Trade Union Congress" (a remarkable resolution (1) calls for all workers to be organised in unions, (2) fight for the recognition of unions, for 8-hour day, for 36 hours' week for underground mine workers, demand for better housing, demand for profit sharing, etc.); "Bhil Unrest" (new tendencies in the Congress); "In Bengal" (demand for mass action—close cooperation with TUC).

Article: "New Economic Policy in Russia".

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 3, 15 June 1922

Editorial: "Which Way?"

Press Review: "Singaravelu's Views".

Articles: "Gandhi—an Analysis", Part II, by Santl Devi; "Danger Ahead" by M. N. Roy.

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 4, 1 July 1922

Editorial: "Immediate Task".

Notes and Comments: "Inchcape Axe", "Khaddar"; "Revolution in the Moslem Countries".

Article: "Bokharan Revolution" (translated from Uzbek) by Omar El Mohammadi.

Press Review: "Death of Comrade Abdul Rahim" (a Muhajir youth), *Internationale** in Urdu sung at his funeral in Moscow.

Books to Read—(1) *India in Transition*, (2) *History of British Socialism*: M. Beer, (3) *Reminiscences of Russian Revolution*: Phillips Price.

Home and Abroad: "How Revolution Spreads" (Lenin's article on the 10th anniversary of Pravda, 1912-22); "A Historical Trial" (trial of socialist revolutionaries); "Calcutta Seamen's Strike"; "Terror in the Punjab" (25,000 arrested in India in the last 3 months, 4,000 in the Punjab alone in the course of the Akali movement).

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 5, 15 July 1922

Editorial: "Participation in the Councils".

Notes and Comments: "A Clever Enemy" (concessions to plantation

* Urdu version of the *Internationale*, viz "Kya khak hai teri zindagi/ Uth eh Gharbe be-nawa" etc. was composed by one of the Muhajirs in 1921. This was probably the first public occasion when it was sung by Indian communists.

workers promised); "Noble Sentiments" (Jawaharlal Nehru's statement in court on his second arrest), "Bewildered Leadership" (C. Rajagopalachari in *Young India*); "Respectable Revolution".

Books: (1) *Socialism and Nationalism*: J. Conolly, (2) *Self-Determination Swindle*: Eugene Paul (Czechoslovakia), (3) *Bread Loan*: Tom Bell.

With *Vanguard* of 15 July was enclosed a manifesto to All-India Congress Committee signed by M. N. Roy and Surendranath Kar.*

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 6, 1 August 1922

Editorial: "Irish Tragedy"

Notes and Comments: "Groping in the Dark"; "Mulshi Petha Affair".

Articles: "Respectable British Labour", "Turkish National Revolution".

Press Review: "A Great Strike" (seamen's strike).

Books to Read: *Defence of Terrorism*: L. Trotsky.

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 7, 15 August 1922

Editorial: "Labour Organisation".

Notes and Comments: "Back to the Fold"; "Peculiar Psychology"; "Russian Relief" (re. Implementing the resolution of the Jharia session of the AITUC issuing a call to help the famine-stricken in Russia).

Articles: "The Political Situation" by M. N. Roy (Bardoli resolution fully quoted and criticised); "The Arrest of Gandhi and After"; "Recent Activity of American Capital in China" by Arthur Rosenberg.

Books to Read: *ABC of Communism*: Bukharin, *Communism and Society*. Wilhelm Pauli, *Life and Teachings of Karl Marx*. Max Beer.

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 8, 1 September 1922

Editorial: "Civil Disobedience".

Notes and Comments: "Why the Failure"; "At the Crossroads"; "Another Eye-Opener" (Akali movement); "Missed the Point", "Ominous Sign"; "Democracy and Labour" (re. Baptista).

Articles: "Assassination of Jemal Pasha" by Karl Radek; "Politics for Republican" by Willy Gallacher; "A World Congress" (an announcement of the Fourth Congress of the CI meeting in November 1922, M. N. Roy calls for delegates from India).

Home and Abroad: "Jute Mill Strike".

Books: *Review of Gandhi vs Lenin* by S. A. Dange.

"Vanguard", Vol. I, No. 9, 15 September 1922

Editorial: "The Bolshevik Bogey" (on the ban on *Vanguard* as a Bolshevik propaganda sheet, answer to this charge of the British government).

* This is mentioned in Cecil Kaye's *Communism in India*, pp. 37-38.

Documents of History of Communist Party, 1917 to 1922

- Notes and Comments: "Release of Political Prisoners"; "On the Wrong Track". Memo of Bengal TUC" (re. strikes); "Relation of Nations". War and Class-War in India".
- Article: "The Collapse of Extremism" by M. N. Roy.
- Press Review: "All-India Railway Workers' Federation" (first convention meeting in Bombay presided over by C. F. Andrews); "Home Policy of CP of Russia" (extract from Zinoviev's speech).
- Book Review: "Three Phases of Bepin Chandra Pal."

3. Articles from "The Vanguard"

(a) OUR OBJECT

The Indian people finds itself today in a great epoch-making period. The gigantic movement, which is shaking the entire country and is arresting the attention of the world, is not to be looked upon as a simple political phenomenon. It is of much deeper and wider significance than is commonly attributed to it. "The determined struggle of a great nation for political freedom"—this is not an adequate definition of it. This definition covers but one aspect of the great movement, which fundamentally is a special upheaval of tremendous magnitude and historic importance. A people, which has been forced to remain in a state of social stagnation for a long, long time, is at last waking up in order to start on the road of progress. The government, which rules in the interests of the foreign exploiting class, must be the objective of the first onslaught, because this foreign domination has been the immediate cause of the backwardness of the Indian people. Colonial exploitation by imperialist capital prevented the normal economic development of the country; and a backward state of economic development is not conducive to the growth of the political consciousness of a people. Thus the British rule in India

has been responsible for thwarting the free play of the forces of progress that are inherent in every human community. If the very existence of the British government is threatened today it is not because the people of India has suddenly made up its mind to free itself from foreign thralldom, but because the inexorable forces of progress inherent in the organism of Indian society—the forces that have been temporarily cramped by the British domination, among other agencies—are asserting themselves. The political aspect of the Indian movement—the desire for national freedom, the enthusiasm to fight for swaraj—therefore, rests on the background of the upheaval of these mighty social forces. The latter is the root-cause of all that is happening in India today; its development will determine the trend and consequences of the political struggle.

This being the case, it is evident that the correct guidance of the political struggle—the fight for national freedom—is conditional upon a clear and adequate understanding of the social foundation of the movement. Those who constitute the front rank of the Indian nation fighting for political emancipation from foreign domination must be aware of the nature of the forces that are urging the people on in this great struggle in which they are involved, a struggle which finds itself pitted against the British rule in its first stages, but which is destined to bring about much wider and deeper consequences than the termination of the absolute hegemony of imperial capital. The people of India must go forward, not only in political field, but in other aspects of social life as well. The Indian movement is . . .

tionable tactics. Instead of helping the masses to develop economic and social consciousness, their ignorance has been relied upon for intensifying the political struggle. That is, instead of putting itself at the head of the spontaneous current of mass energy, the National Congress has greatly dissipated its leadership by acting contrary to it. Here we are not going into the discussion as to whether the Congress followed this mistaken policy intentionally or not. What we want to point out is, that in consequence of this mistaken tactics of relying on one agency of oppression, viz ignorance, in order to fight the other, the Congress has landed in political bankruptcy, after a spectacular career under the banner of noncooperation. A people cannot be educated in modern political principles, the application of which is evidently the programme of our national struggle, until and unless they extricate themselves from the bondage of religious superstitions and social prejudices. It is true, and nobody believes in it more than we do, that the people of India will not be able to get rid of these traditional bondages so long as they don't conquer the right to live a free and normal national life. And the first requisite for such a national existence is the end of foreign domination over the economic and political life of the country. But it will be disastrous to forget that our national energy can vanquish the foreign oppression only when it is directed in the channel of progress. Foreign rule has to be overthrown because it has been obstructing our national growth and is detrimental to our economic and social evolution. But if a programme is set up which frankly forgoes all forward movement of the Indian society, it is but logical that the advocates of such a programme are trying to obstruct the progress of the Indian people, and therefore are not capable of leading us in this great historical period of our national life. This was the case with the National Congress ever since it came under the influence of orthodox nationalism. At last it is falling victim to its own contradictions. Still unconscious of their mighty energy as well as of their historic mission, the Indian masses will shape the destinies of our nation. The economic forces that are awakening them out of their age-long stagnation and apathy will assert them-

selves, and the leadership of the political movement must confirm to their imperious dictates.

It is a mistake to think that the movement is the creation of great personalities. On the contrary, leaders are created by the movement. The greatness of the leader comes in where he can understand the forces behind him and can guide the movement in accordance with the natural trend of these forces. The compromising politics of the moderates, those venerable fathers of Indian nationalism, brought the extremists, who under the leadership of Gandhi assumed the title of noncooperators, into power. But the outstanding leaders of the noncooperation movement have so far failed to appreciate the real magnitude of the forces they are called upon to marshal on the arena of national struggle. Believers in the false philosophy which teaches that a few great men can shape the destinies of a nation, these leaders neglected to look deep into the causes which brought about the gigantic popular upheaval. They failed to understand the forces which infused fighting spirit in the hitherto inert masses. Instead of leading the rebellious masses in accordance with their immediate demands, these leaders sought to impose on them their own will and idiosyncrasies. Had they followed the former course, they would have developed the consciousness of the masses of the people, because the latter would have seen in practice that the political movement for national liberation was closely related with their everyday life. The abstraction of a golden age under the aegis of a spiritual swaraj cannot for any length of time allure the pauperised masses fighting for a full meal or piece of cloth. You cannot lead people into the battle in order to conquer the right of material progress by dinning in their weary ears the virtues of poverty and the philosophy of sacrifice. If poverty and simple living were the highest virtues, then who deserve more the Kingdom of Heaven than the Indian people?

However, the movement cannot always be either betrayed by the moderates or misled by the visionary noncooperators. The masses, who are the backbone of the struggle for national liberation, are learning to find their own way. Bitter experience gained in hard struggles is clarifying their

vision. They are no longer utterly unconscious of what they are fighting for. The debacle of the moderates and the bankruptcy of the philosophy of nonviolent noncooperation will be inevitably followed by the shifting of the storm centre of the political movement. The rebellious masses are no longer going to be utilised for the experiments of this or that socio-political philosophy. Further development of the national struggle will be based more and more consciously on the material needs and demands of those who will take part in it. In short, we are entering a new phase in our struggle for freedom. We will no longer grope in the dark. We will no longer exhort the hungry people to suffer for some visionary swaraj to be attained by "soul-force" purified in the fire of poverty. Although it will be stupid to talk of premature violence, we are, nevertheless, of the opinion that nonviolent revolution is an impossibility. The Indian masses—the workers organised in trade unions, the peasants forming their own fighting organs in the form of the Akali Dal, kisan sabhas, aikya sabhas, etc.—call for a realist orientation in our political struggle. To help the formation of this much-needed realist orientation is the object of THE VANGUARD.

(Editorial, No. 1, 15 May 1922.)

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(b) EIR STRIKE

The strike of the workers on the East Indian Railway brought into prominence two facts. First, it demonstrated the power of mass action and, secondly, it showed how deplorably the mass energy is dissipated when an action of the working class is directed (or misdirected?) by men without any understanding whatsoever of the real character of the struggle. The disastrous result of the exodus of the Assam plantation workers and the attitude taken by a good many Congress leaders towards the AB Railway and River Navigation Company strikes which complicated the situation betrayed the inability of the middle class humanitarians to defend the interests of the working class in a critical moment. The EIR strike is a repetition of the same bitter

experience. A spontaneous mass action tied up almost completely the communications. If the men could have held on for a couple of weeks, the company would have been obliged to concede to all their demands. But there came in the gratuitous intervention of Mr Andrews who, perhaps involuntarily, rendered more help to the distressed company than to the striking workers. He opened negotiations with the agent in behalf of the men whom he pretended to represent, but whose real grievances he failed to appreciate. What could be expected from a man who is deadly against mass action and who does not recognise the right of the exploited to improve their condition by joint action. A believer in benevolent autocracy, Mr Andrews from the beginning maintained that the strikers should take the good intentions of the company for granted. Perhaps he was more concerned in terminating as quickly as possible the inconvenience caused to the public by the strike, than in the welfare of the workers. But what he did was to save the profits of the bondholders. He maintained from the very beginning that the men were in the wrong for having come out at Tundla without giving the company proper notice. When the first fighting step was taken by the strikers in calling a delegates' conference which would consider a general strike affecting several railway systems, Mr Andrews was horrified and publicly denounced this attempt "for a syndicalist strike". But it was already too late; the power of resistance of the poor workers had been exhausted, and negotiations and exhortations had broken the solidity of the strikers' ranks; the less resolute ones had already begun to return to work, and the movement had been localised, to be easily crushed by the revengeful employers.

A great majority of the Indian workers are still ignorant. They are still greatly disorganised. Methods of fighting for their class interests are not known to them. Under the lash of economic oppression they are developing a fighting mood, which is expressed through these spontaneous strikes. Instead of making an ethical or humanitarian issue out of them, these instances of spontaneous mass action should be seized to develop the revolutionary consciousness of the strikers. But to lead these initial battles of revolution are needed men

with an entirely different political outlook and social philosophy.

(No. 1, 15 May 1922.)

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(c) MR GANDHI: AN ANALYSIS—I—BY SANTI DEVI

And so, Mahatma Gandhi, variously described as "the greatest apostle of nonviolence since the days of Buddha and Jesus", "the prophet of spiritualised democracy", and "the greatest man of the world", is in jail, condemned to six years' incarceration by the very judge who in passing sentence paid tribute to him as "a great patriot and a great leader, and even those who differed from you in politics look up to you as a man of high ideals and a leading noble and even saintly like". It is not the purpose of this article to add or detract from the praise that has been heaped upon the head of this unique leader of Indian nationalism.

Rather it is aimed to estimate as carefully and impartially as may be the essential qualities of Gandhi the saint, philosopher, politician and patriot as applied to present-day Indian conditions and to derive what valuable lessons we may from his failures as well as successes of the past three years.

Gandhi the Saint

No one can know of the life and personality of Mr Gandhi and fail to render tribute to him as "a saintly man who purifies us at sight". In an age of intense individualism, of uncompromising struggle for existence, in which national, racial and class conflicts are hardening for the final battle that will usher a new era of social relationships and civilisation, the golden legend of this idealist and ascetic who has carefully given his whole life in the service of his fellows, upon whose personal character no faintest blemish rests, whose fearless courage and love of truth stand proven before the whole world and who combines the naive purity and innocence of a child with the iron will and unbending principles of a man, such a character will go down in history with the same moral force upon posterity as those

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saintly prototypes of the past, Thomas Aquinas and St Francis of Assisi. Gandhi the individual has impressed individually, thousands of lives who are uplifted and inspired to better things for having known him. His personal example gives force to his moral precepts, for no man can say of him that he does not practise all that he preaches. And it is this moral force of his, dimly radiating beyond the confines of vast India to the indifferent world beyond, which has brought him into prominence as a figure of international interest. Gandhi the philosopher, the politician and patriot is but one of many on this storm-tossed sea of Indian nationalism, unknown and uncared for by the heedless nation who have long since learned not to tread on the tail of British imperialism. But Gandhi the saint—here is a spectacle unique in every age, and as one of the great men cast up by the waters of time, he belongs to every country.

Here is in this half-naked, slender, brown body so completely dominated by the mind within, a strength that dreadnoughts cannot conquer nor machineguns subdue though they shatter it to bits, and out of the respect bred of this certain knowledge, the British empire leaves him unharmed. Six years' simple imprisonment, "with everything possible to make him comfortable", is the utmost they dare attempt, and this merely to remove him from the arena of active politics. When the storm dies down a little, they will let him free. For they will soon learn, if they do not already know, that Gandhi the saint in prison becomes to India's adoring millions Gandhi the martyr and from the days of the Roman empire onward, the spectacle of martyrdom as exercised a potent and irresistible effect upon the mass mind. It is well and truly said that, "Mahatma in jail is more powerful than Mahatma free", not alone for the constant impetus it gives to Indian nationalism by working upon the sympathetic indignation of the masses, but because in jail his qualities of sainthood can radiate at their fullest and best uncongested by the exercise of those more worldly faculties of political leadership in which Mr Gandhi is not so conspicuously successful

Gandhi the Philosopher

As a philosopher, Mr Gandhi is neither original nor unique. He merely reiterates, in an age peculiarly out of tune with his teachings, the ancient doctrine of Hinduism whose ramifications are spread through the world and which are spread at various times to inspire the prophets and saints of other lands. To say that he is a disciple of Buddha and Christ is merely to confirm this statement, for the best teachings of Buddha and Christ were drawn from a common fountainhead which made India and the Orient the mother of all religions. Nor does Mr Gandhi claim originality in any sense. He frankly professes that teachings of pure Hinduism as interpreted through the Bhagvad Gita and the Bible and seeks to lead not only India, but all humanity back to the golden age of the Vedic cult, when the heresy of materialism and the social conceptions of caste and class did not exist. Like Tolstoy, who was himself fed upon Hindu philosophy and whose place in the revolutionary movement of Russia is peculiarly similar to the role of Mr Gandhi, nonviolence is the first article of faith, "it is my faith". In an article on non-violence published in *Young India*, the tenets of this faith are very clearly outlined and it is necessary to quote the gist of it in order to appreciate its bearing on the political creed which is merely the application of philosophy to contemporary Indian politics.

"Nonviolence is complete innocence Complete non-violence is complete absence of ill will against all that lives—and in its active form good will towards all life. It is pure love, and, as I read it in the Hindu scriptures, in the Bible, in the Koran, nonviolence is a perfect state. It is the goal towards which mankind moves naturally, though unconsciously. Man does not become divine when he personifies innocence in himself, only then does he become truly man.

"Restraint is the law of our being. Highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe... Satisfaction lies in the effort not in the attainment."

Again in *Young India* of February 16, commenting on the

remarks of Sir William Vincent in the Bengal Legislative Council, Mr Gandhi enunciates the purest Hindu gospel of self-renunciation, beloved by Schopenhauer:

"Willing death is deliverance. According to Hindu belief the highest known form of freedom, that is salvation, is possible only when a man voluntarily surrenders his body and becomes totally indifferent to bodily wants. Political freedom of disciplined character is a prelude to a higher type. It is therefore in the fitness of things that we should voluntarily surrender our possessions, including our bodies for the attainment of national freedom. We must therefore develop an equally infinite capacity for suffering, if we are to replace government by force with government based on popular will."

Thus then, nonviolence is pure love, perfection towards which man is naturally progressing as a goal, through the highest restraint and suffering. Satisfaction lies not in the attainment of the goal but in the effort. Satisfaction, the beatification of freedom, is attainable through the willing death and surrender of all earthly possessions and political freedom the prelude to a higher type is attainable by developing an infinite capacity for suffering. Nonviolence or love, in its negative state, is complete absence of ill will towards all that lives, and in its positive aspect it is good will towards all life. What does this doctrine mean applied to the realm of practical politics? It means, to call a spade a spade, that India will be free when two things are accomplished—first, when three hundred millions of Indians living under the most refined and perfected system of imperial exploitation ever devised; starved, maltreated, ignorant and brutalised by armed oppression of a tiny fraction of overlords; reduced to grovelling impotence and hopelessness by constant threat of every engine of destruction which modern civilisation has invented, directed against their disarmed helplessness, that these three hundred million slaves will be free when they have learnt to the last man, not only to bear no ill will but practise non-violence against their oppressors, but to love them completely and perfectly. But not yet free, only half free, for there remains another equally important thing to be

accomplished. The realisation of such a perfect atmosphere of complete nonviolence of infinite love means that three hundred million Indians will cheerfully endure all kicks and insults, all hunger and nakedness, all poverty and wretchedness until those touched and overcome by such demonstration of man's innate divinity will respond to it by throwing away their machineguns and fleshpots, their treasure hoards and princely power, and will welcome their three hundred million brethren to a new fraternity of man, where liberty and equality will rule the human race under the aegis of perfect love.

Such was the dream of Gautama, of Christ and such is the millennium of Gandhi. Do you doubt it? Listen to his words of applied philosophy:

"The political nonviolence of the noncooperator does not stand the test in the vast majority of cases. Hence the prolongation of the struggle. Let no one blame the unbending English nature. The hardest fibre must melt in the fire of love. When the British or other nature does not respond the fire is not strong enough.

"If nonviolence is to remain the policy of the nation, we are bound to carry it out to the letter and in the spirit. We must then quickly make up with the English and the co-operators. We must get their certificate that they feel absolutely safe in our midst, that they regard us as friends though we belong to a radically different school of thought and politics. We must welcome them to our political platform as honoured guests; we must meet them on neutral platform as comrades. Our nonviolence must not breed violence, hatred or ill will.

"If we approach our programme with mental reservation that, after all, we shall wrest power from the British by force of arms then we are untrue to our profession of non-violence—if we believe in our programme, we are bound to believe that the British people are not unamenable to the force of affection as they are undoubtedly amenable to the force of arms.

"Swaraj is a condition of mind and the mental condition of India has been damaged. India will win independence and swaraj only when the people will have acquired the

strength to die of their own free will. Then there will be swaraj."

Mr Gandhi's political philosophy is more difficult to define than his moral one. But Russians who are versed in all shades of political thought would place him in the slender category of "anarchist-mystics". He is an anarchist because he appeals essentially to the individual man and the only possible response to his cult is an individual one, to expect to move masses of men by moral predications that rest ultimately with the individual for fulfilment is utopianism. The gigantic failure of Christianity is the best proof of this. He is a mystic, because he appeals to the intangible something which he turns into "soul force" as the dynamics of his movement towards emancipation. He is above all a subjectivist who looks to psychology to explain that which the objective working of material laws are alone responsible for. "Swaraj is a condition of mind!" It is the subjectivism of the man who sees man everywhere controlling the material force of his existence, and who does not stop to reckon that man himself is the product of his material environment, which has predetermined the working of his mentality. If mere voluntary self-immolation upon the altar of national freedom be the price of swaraj the Indian people ought long ago to have attained the blessing, for nowhere else has the cult of self-annihilation been so practically fulfilled, be it by the philosophers and sanyasis of the past or by the millions of deaths through poverty and plague and famine which the Indian masses have patiently endured, or by the vicarious sacrifice of thousands of lives by the young patriots of India reborn. Mr Gandhi himself sometimes doubts the possibility of the attainment of perfect nonviolence, that first prerequisite to swaraj, but smothering his doubts he bids the people to struggle towards its realisation. "Each time I fail, my effort will be all the more determined for my failure." It is the splendid but impractical idealism conceived in much the same spirit with which Christ bade the rich man give away his all to the poor, and comforted those who had nothing, telling them "Blessed are the humble, for they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." Is it because Mr Gandhi sees his

people disarmed and bleeding, helpless and hopeless before the superior might of the conqueror, that he counsels the philosophy of nonviolence which is after all a philosophy of despair when by analysis it is patent that no one believes in its ultimate fulfilment? For thousands of years the Indian people have listened to such counsels, for thousands of years they have heeded them, bowing their broken lives before the inscrutable working of providence, accepting their earthly lot without complaint and looking to death willingly for their deliverance. Nonviolence, resignation, perfect love and the release from the pain of living—this is the substance of Indian philosophy handed down through the ages by a powerful caste of kings, priests and philosophers who found it good to keep the people in subjection. Mr Gandhi is nothing but the heir of this long line of ghostly ancestors—he is the perfect product of heredity and environment. His philosophy of satyagraha is the inevitable fruit of the spiritual forebears. What is unfortunate is that Mr Gandhi's revived philosophy of other-worldliness coincides with a most unprecedented growth in Indian national life—the growth of a spirit of revolt against material privation on the part of the Indian masses. His time-honoured doctrines of orthodox Hinduism have conflicted with this new spirit of rebellion, have temporarily controlled and arrested its development, thanks to his saintly personality, which has more hold on the imagination of the Indian people than his outworn doctrines of self-annihilation. For this involuntary service, the British government has every reason to be grateful to him and it was a dim realisation of his pacific influence upon the unruly masses as well as a very whole-some fear of rousing the fury of the people to the breaking point, that made the government stay its hand so long before arresting him. It was only when Mr Gandhi had himself prepared the way to his own arrest by schooling the masses to calmness and had stemmed the flood tide of the spontaneous upheaval of social and economic emancipation by rebuking every outbreak of mass energy, every manifestation of force on the part of the people, and by throwing the entire weight of his loved personality on the side of peace, nonviolence and nonresistance that the

bureaucracy dared to arrest him. The story of his political career is best studied in a separate chapter which we will title "Gandhi, the Politician and Patriot".

(No. 1, 15 May 1922)

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(d) A NEW TURN

As president of the Bengal Provincial Conference, Mrs C. R. Das made two suggestions which can be considered as the only constructive contribution made by the gathering. But these suggestions failed to attract much attention. All our leaders can very profitably read and digest this remarkable utterance of hers: "We have been depending on the so-called educated classes during all these years. But their very existence is mixed-up with the permanence of the present-day government organisations. It is difficult for them to live without English courts, schools and colleges." This realistic analysis is followed up by the suggestion that the Congress must turn its attention to the workers and peasants, who alone can exercise noncooperation with effect. We may add that the organisation of workers and peasants will not depend on the Congress led by people actuated by the ideas expressed by Mr Sen Gupta. The toiling masses are growing conscious of their own interest and will soon know how to defend it. But if sincere revolutionary nationalists do not see the necessity of adopting such a programme as will keep the working class within the folds of the political movement, the latter may be led astray by scheming agents of imperialism along the channel of economic struggle of a conservative and nonpolitical nature. Such an eventuality will be disastrous to the movement for national liberation, because it will calm down the revolutionary upheaval of the masses without which the British rule cannot be overthrown.

Mrs Das also suggested that noncooperators should seek election to the councils. This suggestion has evoked some criticism and created consternation. We do not think that much depends on whether we go to the councils or not. But surely the election can be utilised for our propaganda as well as to fight the renegade moderates. A sort of guerilla

warfare can be waged against the government in this way. Only, this idea is dawning upon the Congress too late. We should have taken part in the last election. In those days the people were in such an agitated state of mind that all the seats, at least most of them, could have been captured by Congressmen. Thus we could have forced the moderates to noncooperate in spite of themselves, because they would have been excluded from the councils; and noncooperation in so far as rejecting the reforms were concerned would have been perfectly achieved, because boycott of the councils by the elected members would have precipitated an interesting situation fraught with immense possibilities.

But now the leaders of the noncooperation movement will fight shy of going to the elections; because they are no longer so sure of their hold on the people, who have been greatly disillusioned by the hesitating tactics followed during the last two years. In any case the question deserves some attention.

(No. 2, 1 June 1922.)

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(e) BENGAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS

(From our Correspondent, Calcutta, April 29)

The provincial conference of the trade unions was held here several days ago. As is still usual with all Indian labour conferences, it was controlled and conducted by people who, at best, can be called moved by humanitarian motive. But in fact most of them are to be suspected of sinister designs, such as to curb the spontaneous revolt of the toiling masses and to prevent the fatal eventuality of this mass revolt being turned into a political channel. The lengthy speeches made by these gentlemen prove that they are evidently more anxious for the welfare of the abstract conception called "the community", than for the improvement of the conditions of the working class. Anyhow among the resolutions adopted there are some clauses which will prove mighty weapons in the hands of the workers under their class leadership which is trying to overthrow the improvised "labour leaders" of briefless harristers and bene-

violent landlords. The most remarkable of the resolutions are: (1) all the workers should be organised into unions; (2) to fight for the recognition of the unions; for eight-hour day and 36 hours a week for underground work; better housing, etc.; (3) to demand the introduction of profit-sharing and many other reformist clauses.

(No. 2, 1 June 1922.)

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(f) WHICH WAY?

The imminent collapse of Gandhism has brought the opposing elements within the Congress Party to a parting of the ways. The rightwing headed by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is seeking reunion with the moderates, their spiritual kin, and judging by the latest pronouncements of the Liberal League and kindred organisations, this happy alliance is not far distant. The leftwing, which made up the so-called extremist elements, is floundering about in a bewilderment pitiful to contemplate. The recent provincial conferences held in Bengal, Central Provinces, Maharashtra and Punjab exposed this division in the Congress ranks very clearly and the resolutions adopted, as well as those which were defeated, show the general tendencies of both camps.

The moderates, once admitted to the Congress ranks, will see the end of noncooperation's spectacular career and the general merging of the elements unfit for a party of constitutional holding a government of law and order. What then of the extremists who for three years past have had as their avowed object was the overthrow of the present satanic system and the establish-

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June 15th, 1922

WHICH WAY?

The enormous influence of Comintern has brought the question of the way to the Congress into the forefront of the issue. The question is not whether the Congress should be held in London, or whether it should be held in India, or whether it should be held in some other place, but whether it should be held at all. The Congress is a necessary step towards the realization of the Indian National Congress, but it is not a sufficient step. The Congress is a necessary step towards the realization of the Indian National Congress, but it is not a sufficient step.

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BENGAL TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

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Depleted though their number is by numerous arrests and convictions, there are enough extremists at large to make their influence felt in the guidance of the Congress at this typical juncture, did they but know clearly what they wanted and what was needed to save the situation. Their own confusion and lack of political programme creates division among their own ranks. They speak of a "constructive programme" as opposed to the destructive one whose slogan

was "nonviolence and noncooperation, boycott and civil disobedience"—but they have nothing better to offer than "swadeshi, the establishment of technical schools and propaganda abroad". It should be here pointed out that both these so-called "programmes" are not programmes at all, but tactics, i.e. methods for attaining a given end, which is the programme. A real programme is what the Congress has never adopted unless we call Mr Gandhi's "swaraj" a programme.

If the Congress seeks a constructive programme to save itself from imminent disintegration, it should take this vague formula of swaraj and courageously analyse it, find out what it means and then find ways to attain it. The leaders of the Congress instinctively feel that such an analysis will create sharp divisions in their own ranks and therefore they avoid it. But for the sake of a superficial unity, which is already giving way, they are sacrificing something more essential to their very existence as a fighting body and this is the support of the masses.

If three years ago, the Congress attained nationwide power and significance in the eyes of the British government, it was because the social class upon which it based itself was no longer a few intellectuals, but the broad masses of the Indian people, who had commenced their revolutionary struggle to improve their material existence. By assuming the command of this struggle the Congress became for the first time a popular assembly, whose demands were backed up by the overpowering force of mass action. A strike was called to protest against the Rowlatt Act and the Indian people obeyed, a hartal was ordered to protest the visit of the Prince of Wales and the response was nationwide. When any party commands such support, it must be respected even by an autocratic government.

But today the Congress does not command the broad support of the masses, and blame lies with itself. It is not because Mr Gandhi was beloved by the Indian people who have forsaken the Congress since his arrest. Not at all Mr Gandhi meant for the masses a "Gandhi raj" in which the peasants would not have to pay taxes, in which the factory workers would work less and be paid more. The

simple Indian worker and peasant who obeyed the Congress dictates so blindly and unhesitatingly, who struck, were arrested or wounded and killed by the armed police, were fighting for their swaraj, which they defined for themselves according to their greatest need. But the swaraj of the Congress leaders was not their swaraj, as they discovered after painful experience, after innumerable sacrifices, failures, disappointments and disillusionments. The Congress swaraj ordered them to give up nonpayment of taxes, declared it "dangerous to make political use of the factory workers"

Today the Indian workers and peasants are going their own way. The Congress robbed of their support has sunk into impotency. If it would regain its lost power, let it go to the trade unions and the peasant sabhas, listen to the grievances there discussed, and incorporate them into a truly constructive programme which will draw the wider masses once more within the folds of the Congress Party, to fight under its command for swaraj

(Editorial, No. 3, 15 June 1922)

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(g) PRESS REVIEW

The Hindu has published a series of articles from Mr M. Singaravelu who is awfully indignant at the audacity of those, particularly of the Nagpur subcommittee, who suggest some change in the Congress programme. He would deprive the Nagpur subcommittee of the right to live on the holy soil of mother India if he could, for its having declared that the aims of the Congress were material and should be attained by material means. Mr Singaravelu exclaims: "Our course towards swaraj does not say it ought not to shift towards expediency or convenience or the so-called practical political shibboleths of Europe or America." He insists on "simplicity and suffering". His philosophy is: "Better to suffer under serfdom in the presence of good than to enjoy freedom coquetting with evil." Well, this reactionary philosophy kept the Indian people in the "good atmosphere" of serfdom for centuries; why, then, should there be a change in India? Even the swaraj of Mr Singaravelu will entail a change in

the present condition of India. Is it not queer that, one who, like Mr Singaravelu is ready to "barter away all material possessions for a religious struggle", should bother himself with such a material question as what sort of government there is in India and who holds the Indian people in the sublime atmosphere of serfdom? Mr Singaravelu and his kind are suffering from what can be called spiritualism gone mad. We wonder why don't they retire to the Himalayas leaving the material world to its fate. India would not lose much.

(No. 3, 15 June 1922)

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(h) GANDHI—AN ANALYSIS—II—BY SANTI DEVI

Mr Gandhi is in jail, but Gandhism as a force in Indian politics lives on, influencing the course of the movement for good or ill. It is the purpose of this article to point out the mistakes of Gandhism in the past as well as its triumphs so that those who guide the present struggle for swaraj may apply these lessons of the past to future actions. Until his arrest Mr Gandhi was the head and forefront of the Indian nationalist movement—his ideas, his judgement and his final decisions on questions of programme and tactics were what counted most, influenced though he may have been by other leaders less powerful, because lacking his command of the wide masses of the Indian people. It is therefore necessary to study Mr Gandhi as an individual to fully understand what Gandhism is. In a preceding article we have already analysed him as saint and philosopher; it is essential for our thorough understanding to study him as politician and patriot. A careful survey of his speeches and writings, as well as of his programme and tactics is enough to convince anyone that his personal and political life are merely an application of his philosophical doctrines of soul force, self-abnegation and nonviolence—of the ultimate triumph of spirit over matter. The result has been to create as the dominating force in Indian nationalism for the past three years, what has cleverly been dubbed "transcendental politics". The effect of this transcendentalism, not only upon the British imperialism but upon the Indian people, can best

be seen in a brief review of Mr Gandhi's leadership of the nationalist movement.

Gandhi as a Politician

"Swaraj by nonviolent means can therefore never mean an interval of chaos and anarchy. Swaraj by nonviolence must be a progressively peaceful revolution such that the transference of power from a closed corporation to the people's representatives will be as natural as the dropping of a fully-ripe fruit from a well nurtured tree. I say again, that such a thing will be quite impossible of attainment but I know that nothing less is the implication of non-violence" (M. K. Gandhi).

Here is Mr Gandhi's political philosophy in a nutshell. On reading it one is tempted to enquire in what way does this differ from the conception of sincere British imperialist, who openly declares the civilising mission to be to fit the Indian people for self-government by an evolutionary process of gradual, progressive stages. He, too, desires peace and nonviolence and "law and order" if not perfect love. There is no contrast between his and Mr Gandhi's professed mode and the means to attain it. To find a contrast we must turn to the histories of past revolutions, which were made not by love and peace but by blood and iron. The English revolution of 1640; the French revolutions of 1789, of 1848 and 1870; the German, Italian and Hungarian revolutions of 1848; the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, to cite only a few of the great liberation movements of modern times. Was there ever a revolution in the history of the world which was not ushered by force? Gandhism would learn something by a study of the past. But no, it declares, "India is a special creation of providence, she has a spiritual heritage to transmit to the world; she has evolved a spiritual civilisation like to none ever witnessed before the evolution of the human race, and India can do that which no race, no nation in bondage has heretofore been able to accomplish. She can melt the stony heart of the conqueror and win freedom by nonviolence."

On the subject of India's "spiritual civilisation", it is proposed to deal in a separate and special article, for the

subject is too long to enter into here. Suffice it to say that while India's starving millions are rioting, striking, looting and killing—in a word, behaving exactly like other normal people under the stress of hunger, overwork and privations—the burden of proof as to India's spiritual heritage rests upon Indians themselves. A few ascetics practising ahimsa and abnormally large number of monks and begging friars infested Europe in the middle ages as well as India today, but Europe nevertheless, despite the Christian church and the Holy Roman empire underwent her bloody baptism of countless wars and revolutions before emerging into the nations of modern times. We venture to suggest that India's spirituality is merely the remnant of medievalism clinging to the new organism about to be ushered into being as Indian nationhood. And in this connection we can but quote the profound saying of Marx—"Force is the midwife of revolutions."

So much for the philosophy—now for the programme and practice of Gandhism. The programme can be dismissed in one short word—"swaraj", with the accompanying addenda, "righting the Punjab wrongs", "restoring the Khilafat", and what swaraj is, what kind of government it implies, what definite benefit it will confer on the various classes of the Indian people, remains a vague undecided uncertainty. We know what swaraj is not only since the Ahmedabad Congress of December 1921, full three years after the movement was under way, swaraj is not "outside the British empire", as the rejection of Hasrat Mohani's resolution definitely showed. Swaraj is therefore some form of dominion home rule, as Mr Gandhi himself reluctantly defined it, based upon "four anna franchise"—i.e. the right to vote being limited to those who had obtained the membership in the Congress Party by paying the regular dues. Moderates themselves are aiming at home rule. Wherein then lies the difference between them and Gandhism? The difference, and there is a real even though imperfectly defined one, lies in orientation and tactics. The moderates look to the attainment of swaraj through "constitutional" means; their hope is in voluntary concessions from the British government. The extremists base their swaraj upon

the dynamic action of the masses, which will force concessions from the foreign ruler by "legitimate and peaceful" means. These means, under the inspiration and leadership of Mr Gandhi, took the form of noncooperation with the present government, boycott of schools, law courts, liquor and foreign cloth, manufacture and use of khaddar or homespun by the charkha (spinning wheel); and civil disobedience, chiefly in the form of nonpayment of taxes—all to be practised with absolute nonviolence.

Since the tactics of the noncooperator are based upon and depend for ultimate success upon mass action and call upon the active cooperation of the vast majority of the nation, the Indian workers and peasants, at every step of the way—it is but logical to assume that this indispensable support of the masses would be won by adopting the programme suitable to their immediate needs and desires. The Indian peasantry, who awoke from their age-long resignation during and after the war to demand improvement in their earthly lot by remission of taxes, lowering of rents and access to land, began a spectacular career of looting and burning, rioting and killing in various parts of the country, which presaged a peasant revolt of serious dimensions and which gave the government grave concern. Similarly the Indian proletariat, that comparatively new creation of Indian industrialism, who had been herded into the great manufacturing centres and mercilessly exploited, began to rebel and to enforce their demands for fewer hours, higher wages and better living conditions by means of strikes which spread with lightning rapidity and threatened to paralyse the industrial life of the country. The awakenings of both the peasants and proletariat were independent of the nationalist movement for swaraj; one was economic, the other political. But the nationalist movement, which needed the support of the masses immediately stepped into the leadership of this economic revolt, it sought to guide and control the activities of the people to enforce its own demands; it called haitals or strikes and suspended them at pleasure; announced boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops, the universal use of the charkha and commanded the masses to obey. In return for this usurpation of a

popular upheaval for economic betterment, what did the Congress give the masses? Did it hold out the promise of a swaraj with better wages, lower taxes, enough to eat and to wear and a decent place to live in for the millions of Indian workers on the land and in the factories? Did it hold up the banner of a material swaraj within the comprehension and necessities of the rebellious Indian people?

No, on the contrary, it held before the eyes of the famished workers a fabulous, "spiritual" swaraj, to be attained not by the brief, energetic and wholesome birth-pangs of a revolution but by the old, familiar method of suffering, sacrifice, nonresistance, repentance and prayer. The Indian masses, who had come to the end of their capacity to suffer and endure, must "purify" themselves and become perfectly nonviolent in thought, word and deed before the swaraj of the rishis, the swaraj of a handspinning, handweaving, beast-of-burden India would descend upon them like a boon from heaven. Swaraj will come, next week, next month, next year, when the hungry, naked Indian toilers had transcendentalised themselves. Mahatma Gandhi said so; Mahatma Gandhi was a great saint, a great sage, an incarnation of god himself, whom the white rulers could not harm, did not dare to touch; therefore, simple, ignorant men must trust, believe and blindly obey. The mass movement of riotous peasants, of striking city workers, fell into line with the nationalist movement, danced to the tune of its leaders, obeyed, in so far as lay within his power, the gentle behests of the Mahatma, and waited three years for a swaraj that like a will-o'-the-wisp fled further and further away. Tremendous nationwide hartals paralysed for a day, two days, national life and displayed the majestic strength of the Indian masses; burning of foreign cloth, boycott of cloth and liquor, nonpayment of taxes drained the national exchequer. The British government felt, for the first time of its rule in India, a challenge to its authority. Occasional bloody conflicts between the armed legionaries of the state and the rebellious Indian masses testified to the grimness of the struggle. Twenty-five thousand people were led off to jail unresisting. Indian masses were fighting under discipline for swaraj.

Swaraj never came. One by one, then in dozens and hundreds, the national leaders went to jail. Every attempt at self-defence, at aggressive action by the masses met with sharp reproof from Mr Gandhi—with worse than reproof, with public lamentations, fasting and prayer. The golden promise of swaraj was growing dimmer. The daily misery of the people grew ever worse; government repression, machineguns and jails killed all the spontaneity and enthusiasm of the early struggle. Every chance for direct action was curbed by the mandate of the Mahatma; after Bardoli, the very nonpayment of taxes that had swept the peasants with a thrill of hope, as well as all forms of aggressive mass actions were called off. The bewildered people were told to spin and pray for swaraj. Then came the final blow. The Mahatma, the divine incarnation, all wise, all powerful, was arrested by the white infidels, tried and sentenced to six years in jail. The heavens did not fall, neither the earth yawn at this blasphemy, doors of the jail remained locked upon the saviour of the people who remained peaceful, mute and unresisting, as he had bidden them. His expectation that the miracle justified their obedience. There came no miracle to reward their faith. British raj remained securely enthroned, swaraj was locked in the cell of the Mahatma. Waiting masses were told from behind the bars to "spin and pray".

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Mr Gandhi as political leader cannot escape responsibility for the lamentable state of chaos that besets the Indian movement today. Gandhism must be held accountable for its mistakes as well as honour for its achievements. Constructive contribution of Gandhism in national movement as a whole are: (1) the use of mass action for the enforcement of political demands; (2) the building up of a nationwide organisation such as the Congress Party; (3) the liberation of the national forces from governmental repression by the slogan of nonviolence; (4) the adoption of noncooperation and civil disobedience, especially nonpayment of taxes as tactics in the struggle against foreign rule. Noncooperation and civil disobedience, if properly wielded, are

powerful weapons in the hands of a disarmed people against machineguns and bombing planes. But Mr Gandhi has always shrank from putting his brilliantly conceived tactics to proper use. The boycott was not an original contribution of Gandhism; it had been used in the partition of Bengal crisis in 1906, and Gandhism spoiled the possibility of its successful application by stressing homespun khaddar at the expense of mill-made swadeshi instead of encouraging Indian industrialism by every means.

The shortcomings and failures of Gandhism may be summarised succinctly. The most glaring defect was lack of an economic programme to win the interests and allegiance of the masses, and to make swaraj intelligible to them. Next, and closely related to this omission, was the obstinate and futile desire to unite all the Indian people, landlords and peasants, capitalists and proletariat, moderates and extremists, in a common struggle for an undefined goal. Oil and water cannot remain mixed, lion and the lamb do not lie side by side; each man follows his own material interests, in the fight for a spiritual swaraj. At the slightest danger to their property and profits these zamindars and mill-owners rally to the side of the government of law and order. If it was desired to change this government for the benefit of the majority of the people, it was necessary to sacrifice the interests of the handful of landlords and capitalists to the needs of the hungry stomachs and the naked bodies of the Indian workers and peasants. This the Congress never had the courage to do, and we cannot see that it had even the desire. Resolutions 6 and 7 of the Bardoli Conference ordering the ryots to pay rents to the zamindars prove it. The nationalism of the moderates does not extend beyond its pocket-book; the nationalism of the masses lies in their stomach. In seeking to combine both, Mr Gandhi fell between two stools.

The third great defect of Gandhism was the intrusion of metaphysics into the realm of politics; the confusing of spiritual with temporal aims; the obstruction of the dynamic play of mass action by religious scruples and moral cowardice; the insistence upon soul purification as a means to win the political franchise. Revolution is not a religion,

neither is swaraj a "a mental state". To undermine, overthrow British imperialism is a material problem and to build up a national state in which the condition of the people will be improved is a question of economics, not metaphysics. The freedom of India depends upon the ability of her sons and daughters to face these problems squarely and to find their solutions.

The fourth great defect of Gandhism is its reactionary economics. To run from the machine age back to the stone age may appeal to romantic poets and religious visionaries, but the mighty process of natural evolution cannot be checked by sentimental imagination. Mankind has progressed by painful stages from being the slave of nature to the slave of the machine, which his own intelligence has invented to conquer natural forces. Let us go forward with this intelligence that has carried us so far to the day when mankind will use the machine and nature for its own welfare and enjoyment, instead of, as now, for the selfish profits of the few and the enslavement of man by man. To go "back to the Vedas", back to the chaikha, is to put away the progress of two thousand years and all the bright hopes of a future age when all will be free to cultivate their spiritual side because they have conquered, not run away from, the tyranny of material laws. Mr Gandhi and his disciples may set all India spinning, but they cannot prevent the industrialisation of their country, which has already begun. "Not back, but forward" should be their cry.

The fifth grave error of Gandhism was its vacillations and inconsistencies, its lack of steady driving power towards a given goal. To declare noncooperation with a satanic government, and then to seek compromise with its viceroy; to pronounce modern civilisation to be rotten to the core and "Parliaments are the emblem of slavery", and at the same time to define swaraj as "home rule within the empire"; to promise swaraj on a given date and then postpone it; to declare mass civil disobedience and then postpone it—these are a few of the innumerable and bewildering contradictions of Gandhism, which lost for it the confidence of the masses and respect of all thinking people.

Not of such stuff are leaders made who bring a people to victory; cool judgement and unflinching purpose must radiate confidence to the hundreds of thousands who follow. Gandhism is not revolutionism, but a weak and watery reformism, which shrinks at every turn from the realities of the struggle for freedom.

In criticising thus frankly the political leadership of the Indian movement, its concrete achievements are not overlooked. Mr Gandhi and the noncooperator performed gallant service in the last three years, by leading the Indian people out of helplessness and confusion into the path of agitation and organisation which embraced the entire nation. The contradictions and confusions of the leaders were but a reflection of the chaotic state of the movement itself, just emerging into consciousness. All honour to Mr Gandhi having found a way for his people out of the barbed-wire entanglements of governmental vigilance; that by slogans of nonviolent noncooperation, boycott and civil disobedience, he was able to draw the wide masses into the folds of the Congress Party and to make the Indian movement for the first time truly nationwide. But the movement had outgrown its leaders. The masses sought to forge ahead in the struggle, and their leaders vainly tried to hold them back. The arrest of Mr Gandhi means the disintegration of Gandhism, which is on its last legs, and the development of new ideas, new tendencies, new leaders. Mr Gandhi and his metaphysical politics has become an unconscious agent of reaction; the government could do the Indian movement no greater service than by removing him from its guidance and making of him a martyr, to stir the people onto greater activities.

Gandhi the Patriot

In closing what has been a dispassionate analysis of Mr Gandhi's influence upon the Indian movement, a heartfelt tribute must be paid to Gandhi the politician. We believe that Mr Gandhi's political career is inspired by a deep love for his suffering countrymen, a love nonetheless noble for having made great tactical mistakes. His very utterance breathes a deep desire to free the motherland from

thralldom, and to help her children find a happier life. Few scenes are destined to greater immortality in history than the court-room in which Mr Gandhi read out his scathing indictment of British rule in India, and pleading guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection to the government, asked the judge to give him the maximum sentence.

"From a staunch loyalist cooperator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and noncooperator... to preach disaffection towards the existing system of government has become almost a passion with me... if I were set free, I would still do the same. I would be failing in my duty if I did not do so... I had either to submit to a system which has done irreparable harm to my country, or to incur the mad fury of my people, bursting forth when they heard that truth from my lips... I do not ask for mercy. I am here to invite and to submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a crime... Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a government which, in its totality, has done more harm to India than any previous system... It is the physical and brutal ill-treatment of humanity which has made many of my co-workers and myself impatient of life itself."

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi will live in the annals of his country as one of its saints and patriots, long after his political failures are forgotten.

(No. 3. 15 June 1922)

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(i) DANGER AHEAD—BY MANABENDRA ROY

In the manifesto to the delegates of the Ahmedabad congress we pointed out the ominous possibilities which were sure to follow if the formulation of a definite programme would be deferred any longer, and if the tactics of our struggle would not be determined in accordance with the material needs and grievances of the awakening masses. It was at a great critical moment in our national history that the Ahmedabad congress was convened. Profound objective vision—a revolutionary understanding of the

forces behind our national awakening—was necessary to lead the movement out of that crisis. Our leadership not only failed to rise up to the situation but positively sabotaged the movement which stood on the verge of widespread revolutionary developments.

After Ahmedabad, the impotency and ridiculousness of whose resolutions were eclipsed by the frankly reactionary, not to say nonrevolutionary, programme of Bardoli; the movement entered a stage of confusion and disintegration. The inability to surmount the crisis exposed its innate weakness and encouraged the government to initiate unrestricted repression, which culminated in the arrest and imprisonment of Mr Gandhi himself. The government anticipated that the magnificent demonstration of mass energy during the prince's visit would have its effects on the Ahmedabad congress. In order to prevent such serious possibilities, it had resorted to terrorism already before the congress met. But its nervousness was apparent. Those leaders, who could be expected to take a revolutionary stand, were locked up, but this step was taken more by way of measuring the strength of the movement than as the beginning of a determined reign of terror. The manifest anxiety of the government to negotiate, with the object of striking a compromise, bears out this contention. Had the Congress been able to push ahead instead of beating a retreat at the most favourable moment, the government of Reading would think twice before making such a free use of the big stick. In that case, the release of the political prisoners and many other immediate demands of the Congress could have been imposed upon the government whose precious prestige would thus have received a mortal blow.

But such a step was not to be expected from the Congress under its then leadership. Instead of leading the national army on the road of revolution, it was frightened by its mighty appearance which was denounced first as the "expression of evil", then shamefully betrayed at Bardoli. —

Thus was disclosed the cleavage that separated the revolutionary forces and those who pretended to guide them. The way before the government was clear. All the leaders, who could be expected to understand the situation, were

quickly arrested and put in jail, the Congress organisation was terrorised by wholesale prosecution and persecution, and at last to vindicate the might of the government Mr Gandhi, who had become the greatest friend that the government could wish at that moment, was made a martyr. Then began the disintegration of the movement and an inevitable reshuffling of the various social elements that constituted it. This disintegration and readjustment are the outstanding features of the movement today.

It is not the arrest of this or that leader which has brought about this depression; nor is it the government repression which is to be looked upon as the greatest danger to the movement. The grave danger before us is the impending divorce of the masses from the Congress leadership. The Ahmedabad congress revealed the incapability of our leaders to assume the command of the revolutionary forces; Bardoli and Delhi found them denouncing and running away from them. In the manifesto to the 36th congress we told:

"The greatest problem before the Congress is how to enlist the fullhearted support of the people in the national cause; how to make the ignorant masses follow the banner of swaraj. In order to solve the problem the first thing necessary is to know, what is it that ails the masses? What do they want? What is needed for improving the immediate-environment of their material existence? Because only by including the redress of their immediate grievances in its programme will the Congress be able to assume the practical leadership of the masses of the people."

The Congress has failed to do this. It has failed to understand the social character of the forces it pretended to lead. It ignored the most vital fact that the revolt of the toiling masses—a revolt that added potentiality to the national movement—was firmly against the unbearable conditions of material life. They could not be kept actively involved in a struggle which was not a fight having for its object immediate amelioration and radical cure of these conditions.

The imminent disintegration of the movement did not remain unnoticed by everybody. Long before this crisis came down upon us on the eve of the Ahmedabad congress

—in fact ever since 1919 when a fundamentally revolutionary mass upheaval was dominated by a reactionary social philosophy—we expected this period of disintegration and the consequent depression. We are always aware of the danger ahead, and repeatedly gave warning. This is what we said in the manifesto to the Ahmedabad congress:

“The oppressed, pauperised, miserable workers and peasants are bound to fight, because there is no hope left for them. The Congress must have the workers and peasants behind it; and it can win their lasting confidence only when it ceases to sacrifice them ostensibly for a higher cause, namely the so-called national interest, but really for the material prosperity of the merchants and manufacturers. If the Congress would lead the revolution, which is shaking India to the very foundation, let it not put its faith in mere demonstrations and temporary wild enthusiasm. Let it make the immediate demands of the trade unions its own demands; let it make the programme of the kisan sabhas its own programme; and the time will soon come when the Congress will not stop before any obstacle; it will be backed by the irresistible strength of the entire population consciously fighting for their material interests. Failing to do so... despite its doctrines of soul force, the Congress will have to give way to another organisation which will grow out of the ranks of the common people with the object of fighting for their interests.”

The Congress has failed to take this warning. It did not pay heed to these suggestions. Consequently the masses are leaving the Congress. They are organising trade unions and peasant organisations under the baneful influence of humanitarian reformists, self-seeking leaders and government agents. None of these people can be expected to be friendly to the cause of our national freedom. Their object is to stem the tide of revolution in order to secure the existence of the present political and social system. But they are more clever and realistic than the Congress leaders. They pose as the champion of the interest of the working class, abandoned by the Congress in their struggle for existence. The ignorant toiling masses, not yet in a position to

lead their own struggle, are falling prey to these scheming politicians or masked defenders of imperialism. These improvised "labour leaders" are endeavouring to lead the rebellious masses astray from the straight road of revolution into the channel of reform and compromise. Nevertheless, it is but natural that the exploited workers would rather follow them than the Congress, which never did anything calculated to defend the immediate material interest of the masses.

Let us examine a few outstanding incidents. One of the serious revolutionary outbreaks in recent years has been the peasant movement in the United Provinces. What was the root cause of this movement? Terrible exploitation of the peasantry by the talukdars. The British government, which is a party to this exploitation, had, nevertheless, always posed as neutral in this struggle between the landlords and peasants and the latter had been under this illusion. But the movement which led up to the formation of the kisan sabhas presented a splendid opportunity to expose the government as well as to develop the revolutionary consciousness of the people. When the kisan sabhas came into open conflict with the landowning class, it was no longer possible for the government to maintain its hypocritical role. Police and military were rushed to the scene in order to preserve "law and order" which meant to defend the rights of the talukdars to exploit the cultivators. This showed whose friend the government was in critical moments; the identity of the interests of the government and the rich propertied class was exposed. Here was a golden opportunity for the Congress to step in to agitate and organise the rebelling peasantry against the landowners and government. But the Congress failed. It not only did not take up the struggle of the peasantry, but it denounced them as enemies of "national welfare" (Rae Bareilly, Gorakhpur, Chauri Chaura, etc.) and subsequently upheld the right of the talukdars as sacred and inviolable (Bardoli resolution).

The government, however, did not stop half way. Simultaneously with the terrorism started in order to suppress the acute outburst of an agrarian revolt, it adopted other measures calculated to go to the root of things. First, it

forced the Oudh Rent Act upon the reluctant talukdars and their lackeys in the legislature. The case was bluntly put to talukdars. They were to choose one of the two alternatives, viz to help the government quell the discontent of the peasantry by removing a few of their most flagrant grievances, or to face a widespread revolt threatening the very existence of the landowning class. The government could easily impose its point of view upon the talukdars, because the second alternative could not be chosen by the latter without the full support of the state forces.

The second step taken by the government was the organisation of the aman sabhas, with the object of convincing the agitated-peasantry that their grievances could be best redressed by peaceful organisation which the government was ready to patronise. The real motive of the aman sabhas is known to all; but the fact that their programme appeals to the struggling peasantry is undeniable. Had the Congress been able to make the programme of the revolutionary kisan sabhas its own, instead of preaching to the hungry rebels the injustice of the Sevres Treaty, the atrocities of Amritsar or the abstraction of a psychological swaraj, fire would be taken out of the government's gun, and such a mighty revolutionary force as the millions and millions of pauperised peasantry would be won over to take a consciously active part in the struggle for national freedom led by the Congress. But it was not to be so, the social philosophy of the Congress, as well as its political orientation, precluded it from taking such a revolutionary step.

The failure of the Congress to adopt the right attitude towards the strikers and trade unions has been equally remarkable. No attempt at all has been made to help the struggling workers in their fight to improve the miserable condition they live in. When the workers were in a state of spontaneous revolt produced by the unbearable economic conditions, the Congress held up before them the vague formula of swaraj, which was to be attained by self-purification through self-sacrifice and suffering. Time and again the Congress called upon the workers to declare hartal, but every serious strike having for its object eco-

economic betterment of the working class by inflicting injury upon the employer, was not only looked upon indifferently, but was condemned and sabotaged by the Congress. Mr Gandhi declared: "It is dangerous to make political use of the factory workers." This dictum has till today been the guiding principle of the Congress in its relation to the most revolutionary factor in the Indian movement. Instead of assuming the leadership of the rebellious working class by including the redress of its immediate grievances in its action programme, the Congress remained indifferent to, and on many occasions took a positively hostile attitude towards, the struggle of the workers. The result of this policy, dictated by narrow political outlook and too much respect for the interests of the propertied class, is bearing fruit which will be disastrous unless it is rectified before it is too late.

The overthrow of the foreign domination, which is the avowed object of Indian nationalism, cannot be realised without the strength and effort of that class of the people which has nothing to lose by the consequences of such an overthrow. Which is this class? The wage slaves toiling in the factories and on the field. The number of these wage slaves is legion. This legion alone can win the national independence of India. The propertied class—the landowners, merchants, manufacturers, those engaged in government employments and liberal professions—needs "law and order", a peaceful state of society, for its development. The overthrow of one political institution will inevitably be followed by a period of disturbances. The government maintained by violence and brute force cannot be overthrown without violence and brute force, the pious desire of the Mahatma and our "spiritual civilisation" notwithstanding. Therefore, the aristocrats as well as the thin layer of rich middle class will always be on the side of the English in the crucial moment. And those who are dependent on these two social elements will never advocate such measures as threaten the established order. So it is clear the lower middle class extremism cannot and will not go very far beyond the limits set by the moderates. Then, what is going to happen? Will the Indian people always remain under a foreign domi-

nation? No. India's national freedom will be attained through the efforts of the workers and pauperised peasantry who will go boldly into the struggle, because they have nothing to risk, but everything to gain. Struggle for national freedom is a revolutionary struggle; therefore it has to be carried on by a class which is socially revolutionary—whose further progress is impossible unless the socio-economic stagnation and obstacles are broken and washed away by a gigantic tide of revolution. This class is the workers in the cities, in the mines, on the plantations, on the railways, as well as the pauperised peasantry. The hopelessly miserable condition they have sunk into cannot be improved under the present system, which is sustained by the British government, and which cannot therefore be radically changed without overthrowing the British government as well as revolutionising the socio-economic philosophy on which such a political institution rests. Neither the overthrow of the British government, nor the formulation of a new socio-economic philosophy can be expected from an element which is not irreconcilably hostile to the present state of things, not only political, but economic and social as well. When the prospect of the Indian movement is surveyed from this angle of vision, it becomes evident that the freedom and subsequent progress of the Indian nation depend upon the conscious and concerted action of the objectively and inevitably revolutionary masses.

This being the case, the Congress, which embodies the leadership of our national struggle, should come closer to the masses, should try to win their confidence by helping them in their economic fight. But this has not been done. The mass movement is being led into a reformist channel by the conscious or unconscious agents of the exploiting class, native and foreign. Its revolutionary fervour is going to be choked in the stuffy atmosphere of conservative trade unionism based on the bankrupt theory of "collective bargaining", and of the peasant cooperative movement calculated to create a class of conservative small farmers as a bulwark against the surging agrarian revolt threatening the very foundation of landownership. If these two tendencies are allowed a free field for a comparatively short space of

time, the divorce of the revolutionary mass movement from the wide political struggle for national freedom will be complete, and the British domination will be secure for the time being; because deprived of the potentiality drawn from the the awakening mass energy, the Congress will inevitably degenerate into constitutional democratic agitation of the moderates on the one hand and futile social reformism of the intellectual middle class on the other.

This is the danger ahead of us, and it is a serious danger for those who really want to see our country free and the nation started on the road to progress.

(No. 3, 15 June 1922)

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(j) CALCUTTA SEAMEN'S STRIKE

(From our Correspondent, Calcutta, June 10.)

About 15,000 sailors in the port of Calcutta have struck and the entire shipping is held up. The sailors demanded a fifty per cent increase of wages and refused to sign for the voyage until the demand was complied with. The sailors on board the incoming vessels are also expected to join the strike; the number involved in it increases daily. The dock workers and longshoremen are also agitated and it may not be long before they will join the struggle. In that case the strike will assume a very serious mass character.

(No. 4, 1 July 1922)

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(k) MANIFESTO TO THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Fellow Countrymen,

Since its inauguration by the special session of the Congress in Calcutta, the noncooperation movement has passed through various stages marked by the resolutions adopted at Nagpur, Bezwada, Ahmedabad, Ranchi and Delhi. An analysis of its course shows that the movement has not been kept steady and straight on the line marked out by the revolutionary principles formulated in Calcutta and ratified at Nagpur. The tactics of militant noncooperation

brilliantly conceived weapon available to the Indian people under the present circumstances—has not been wielded with the required courage and determination. Nagpur and Bezawada marked the period of a march forward; but the revolutionary upheavals in the last months of 1921 forced the Congress to show its true colour, and the Ahmedabad, Bardoli and Delhi resolutions were the signs of decline, degeneration and betrayal. They were not the strategic retreat as we are asked to believe, because the movement had acquired the utmost strength and was in the highest of spirits in the months preceding the debacle at Ahmedabad. Consequently there was no need for any retreat. If a retreat it was, it was not one before the onslaught of the government, but a retreat caused by terror struck in our leadership by the rising tide of mass energy. This being the case, Ahmedabad, and particularly the suspension of civil disobedience ordered from Bardoli, was a veritable betrayal of the revolutionary rank and file by the nonrevolutionary and reactionary leadership.

A study of the movement during the last two years, beginning with the special session in Calcutta, brings into evidence two facts, viz (1) that those who were instrumental in formulating the idea of noncooperation did not understand the full significance of what they were advocating, and (2) that ignorance of the socio-economic forces which made the conception of such a revolutionary idea possible made the leaders count more upon artificially fomented sentimental enthusiasm than upon the dynamic revolutionary outburst of mass energy. Revolution must develop along revolutionary channels, and the movement whose leadership you desire to assume is essentially revolutionary. To dissipate and denounce mass action for the sake of the interests of the respectable middle class is the worst crime that can be committed against the freedom of the Indian people. It is tantamount to welcoming the permanence of British rule, or to use the more respectable term, "equal partnership in the commonwealth", rather than brook a radical change in the socio-economic condition to which the Indian masses have been subordinated for centuries, not only by the British conquerors, but also before they came. Can you say, honour-

able gentlemen, that the actions of the Congress during the last half a year do not bring upon its head this serious charge of having betrayed the nation for the interests of a small class of landlords and capitalists? Today you are reaping the fruit of this act of yours and of your colleagues.

The Congress not only failed to appreciate the true character of the movement, but was terrified as soon as its revolutionary aspects began to unfold spontaneously, despite all efforts of the government to suppress them, together with the desire of our own leaders to dissipate and thwart them. The inevitable result has been the present situation, which is marked by confusion, impotency, indecision and despondency. In order to understand clearly how the Congress neglected and then betrayed the revolutionary forces, and thus disgracefully failed to discharge its mighty and honourable task, it is necessary to review the past briefly, and to make this retrospective analysis dispassionately, objectively.

First of all, it is necessary to trace the genesis of the noncooperation movement, to be able to appreciate the significance of the social forces whose development created a situation suitable for the noncooperation movement. This understanding will dissipate the subjective philosophy dominating our movement and at the same time will reveal the crosscurrents of the economic interests, caught in which the Congress is drifting further and further from the stream of revolutionary sentiment. In short, it will help us go beyond the realm of frothy sentimentalism and transcendental politics, in order to discover a solid material foundation of the movement. In this way we will discover that all the pacifism and metaphysical ideas of the Congress were consciously or unconsciously meant to prevent a revolutionary upheaval, which could not be trusted to subside after having helped the native propertied and intellectual classes come to power—a revolutionary upheaval which would not stop short eventually of a radical readjustment in the socio-economic relations of the people.

The idea of "making the government impossible" by withdrawing all popular support could not have been conceived

much earlier than it was done. Mahatma Gandhi, with his imagination and personality, as well as those enthusiastic idealistic people who are following him existed before 1919, causes of discontent against the British rule were also present: agitation for national autonomy or freedom had been going on for a quarter of a century. But a movement of such dimensions, of such a revolutionary character was not inaugurated before. There must have been, then, something lacking; otherwise it was not necessary to wait till 1919 to formulate and adopt the tactics of militant passive resistance. What was lacking, evidently, was the development of some dynamic force without which such a militant measure could not be made effective. As, contrary to your belief, it was not noncooperation slogan that brought about a gigantic popular awakening, but it was the popular awakening that made possible the idea to organise a sweeping onslaught against the government. The spontaneous mass upheaval, as expressed through food riots, strikes, agrarian disturbances etc., which was felt throughout the length and breadth of the country since 1916, spoke for the awakening of revolutionary mass energy. It demonstrated that the hitherto passive and inarticulate masses had begun to develop a fighting mood. Or in other words, the forces, which could make a general offensive against the government possible, had come into existence. The passing of various legislations gagging the press, prohibiting public meetings, restraining the right of assemblage, the atrocious Conspiracy Act, Explosive Substances Act, the Defence of India Act, by which thousands and thousands were locked up in jail without even a pretence of trial—all these repressive measures, to mention but a few, did not provoke such an outburst of protest as followed the introduction of the Rowlatt Bills. In fact, the Rowlatt Bills were formulated only to continue the state of affairs obtaining under the Defence of India Act. But the latter, enforced with an iron hand in the years immediately preceding, did not provoke any serious popular opposition. This goes to show that a 'new' force had come into being around 1919. It was the awakening of mass energy, brought about by economic exploitation intensified

during and immediately after the war. This mass awakening is the objective factor which contributed to the inauguration of passive resistance and, subsequently, of the noncooperation movement.

Such was the genesis of the noncooperation movement; but the resolution adopted in Calcutta and ratified at Nagpur—not to mention the shameful denunciation by the Congress of the revolutionary outbreaks in Bombay, Gorakhpur, Chauri Chaura, etc. and the Bardoli resolution—betrays on the part of our leaders a deplorable ignorance of the social forces which had brought about the movement they pretend to guide. This ignorance, which in many instances was wilful, started the movement on a wrong track. Instead of conforming it to the understanding and immediate necessities of the rebellious masses, it was based upon metaphysical abstractions and the shifting sands of lower middle class sentimentality. Instead of recognising the fact that the movement was the result of a spontaneous social upheaval and, therefore, should be directed in consonance with the dictates of imperious economic laws, the leaders pretended to have created the situation and imagined personalities to be greater than objective forces. Essentially and predominantly a revolt of the exploited and expropriated majority, the movement was utilised by the leaders to further the interests of the propertied and intellectual classes. One can pronounce even a stronger indictment; the leaders sought to utilise a revolutionary social upheaval for strengthening the hand of reaction. While the revolutionary situation in the postwar years was the result of a mass awakening, and the noncooperation movement was made possible by the development of this revolutionary situation, the Congress failed to appreciate it, although it wanted to and did exploit the situation for the purposes of upper and middle class politics. The only social element—the working class including the pauperised peasantry—which is in a position to enforce the tactics of noncooperation, was but casually mentioned in a minor clause of the resolution. Nonpayment of taxes was also mentioned, but later development proved that the Congress did not consider the matter seriously. It

is well known how the whole noncooperation movement has been wrecked upon this rock.

Nevertheless, it has been demonstrated by actual experience that neither the lawyers, nor the students, nor the petty employees, but only the workers and peasants can make noncooperation effective. The toiling masses are the body and soul of the movement. The boycott of the courts by a few lawyers did not and could not paralyse the government. Law courts are an indispensable apparatus of the state, they are necessary to maintain property right. As long as society remain divided into antagonistic classes, law courts cannot be abolished. Courts under a national government controlled by the native upper and middle class will have the same function, viz to coerce and oppress the expropriated. Several thousand noncooperating students could not harm in any way the educational system which creates "slave mentality". Titled persons have not given up their titles, nor have the high officials resigned. It is not possible, not because these people's patriotism is any less sincere, but because the very sentiment of patriotism is based on some material interest or other. The class to which these people belong believes that the welfare of the motherland lies not in their resignation, but in the complete Indianisation of the public service. So this particular clause of the resolution proposed to realise something contrary to the interests of the people on whom its realisation depends. For all the noisiness of lower middle class extremism, the government offices are as full as ever and the state machinery is not affected in any way. Soldiers have not abandoned their services because they were told it was "sinful" to enlist in the British army. The charkha has not crippled the Lancashire textile industry; the khaddar movement is declining on account of the economic fallacy involved in it. The workers and peasants revolted, not to purify their souls, but to have something more to eat. To use khaddar, at the injunction of the Congress, is contrary to this natural desire of theirs, because khaddar being more expensive leaves them less for food. Merchants and manufacturers have not shown any inclination to make less profit for the sake of the nation. They became patriots and stopped

importing foreign goods when it was not profitable owing to the unfavourable exchange of the rupee. But lately the importation is increasing rapidly in spite of the protective and all Patriotic Indian merchants are having difficulties manufactured in England and Japan and will consequently pass it on as the "foreign" commodity and make 50 per cent more profit by this act of patriotism. That are the accomplishments of the noncooperation movement based on the spirit of self-sacrifice and patriotism of the middle class.

While the Congress was frittering away its energy on the above-mentioned activities, whose inevitable collapse was a foregone conclusion to all thinking people, the movement remained based upon mass action, which was misled and dissipated by the leaders of the Congress. When we consider the part played by the working class, including the peasant, in strikes, demonstrations, riots and other mass outbreaks, it becomes clear that the life force of the movement is contained in the minor clause referring half-heartedly to the labouring class. It can be said that whatever has been accomplished by the noncooperation movement has been due to the rebellion of the toiling masses. And when every act of the Congress leaders shows their indifference, terror and in many cases hostility to this driving force behind the movement, is it any wonder that you, divorced from the support of the masses, are packing up for the journey to the camp of the moderates? There are many among you who even cannot do this, because the very moderates are too progressive for them; therefore they want to vegetate and drag a revolutionary movement into the rut of a puerile "constructive programme" based upon reactionary pacifism.

The Congress has failed to enforce the noncooperation programme. You must confess it, if you sincerely want to lead the movement ahead. The cause of this failure was that the revolutionary forces capable of carrying through a national strike were not mobilised and were not given place in the first rank, a place they deserve, because none else can hold the post but a revolutionary vanguard which is the role of the working class in the movement of the national liberation of the Indian people. Experience during the last

half year proves that while in the first stages of the movement it was lack of understanding which prevented the Congress from including the demands of the working class in its programme, the time came when the indifference and even hostility to the working class was provoked by the consciousness of class interests inside the Congress ranks. In proportion as the revolutionary significance of the mass movement became manifest, the reactionary nature of the leadership could no longer be kept hidden. It was on the eve of the Ahmedabad congress, at the very moment when the revolutionary spirit of the toiling masses was raging so high that the political movement could be pushed ahead by means of militant mass strikes, that the crosscurrents in the nationalist movement were to be noticed very clearly. It became evident that there was no community of interest between the leadership representing the propertied and intellectual middle class and the following embodying the rebellious masses of the exploited. The latter's revolutionary actions were repudiated and condemned by the former, because the material interests driving both to action happened to be conflicting. The process of inevitable divorce of the one from the other, therefore, began. This process has gone on widening the cleavage every day, while the Congress has not lifted a little finger to stay it. Attempts were made to maintain the superficial unity of all classes by emotional appeals, all of which have proved unsuccessful. The task you are confronted with today is to find a way to bridge over this cleavage, in order to prevent the struggle for national liberation being sacrificed on the altar of the interests of a small section of the society. The tendency of the Congress since the fateful days at Bardoli, and as expressed in the recent provincial conferences, is dominated by this narrow class interest, which cannot be embellished by all the talk about idealism and spiritual culture.

The solution of the problem that confronts you, your ability to tide over the present crisis depend upon a realistic evaluation of the situation. In the words of the Nagpur subcommittee, "Swaraj is a material thing and has to be attained by material means." All the classes taking part in

the national movement are doing so, actuated not by any spiritual call or abstract ideal. They are driven by their respective material interests, which in relation to one another are conflicting. The merchants and manufacturers want a wider scope for the investment of their capital. National freedom to them means the freedom to exploit the labour power and natural resources of the country. The intellectuals demand political rights, since these will put them on the road to power and progress. They militate with the slogan of provincial autonomy and complete Indianisation of the public service. The semi-intellectual middle class struggles to save itself from dire starvation and steady degeneration. It does not find any hope in the programme of the upper class political parties; therefore it advocates a more radical change in the present system. But its radicalism stops short of the revolution and we find it talking of a vague swaraj. The toiling masses—the workers and peasants—stand in need of an all-round improvement of their economic as well as social condition. This need cannot be satisfied by any concession, nor any reform, since it is the outcome of the present property relations, which will subsist even under a national government. As the lot of the workers and peasants can only be changed by a radical transformation of society, so they are the only relentless and uncompromising revolutionary force. They may be still ignorant of their interests, they may not as yet be conscious of their wants, but they have begun to feel the impulse, as expressed by the wave of strikes and agrarian disturbances.

All these material causes are the motive force of the movement. In proportion as these causes accumulate, collectively or severally, the movement becomes strong. In determining the tactics suitable for the fight, it is necessary to take these fundamental material factors into consideration. The Congress programme appears to advocate the interests of all classes except the workers and peasants—the most revolutionary element, the only element capable of wielding the weapon of noncooperation. It must be said that until recently, the Congress Party did not have any definite

programme, except the cry for some sort of swaraj. No official political programme has yet been formulated, but many authoritative leaders have on various occasions explained what they mean by swaraj. It is nothing more than what the moderates aspire for; only the latter say, "Don't make so much noise, don't bother our imperial peers; let us proceed slowly." The goal of the Liberal League is dominion status, and that of the Congress Party is complete self-government within the British commonwealth. The former proposes to reach the final goal by progressive constitutional means, whereas the latter demand a "change of heart" on the part of the British. Well, divested of the phraseological trimmings, there is no difference between the political programmes of the two parties. Both stand for the interests of the upper and middle classes. But they do differ in the methods by which the objective is to be attained. The tactics of the Congress Party is more militant; but the militancy is rather of words than of deeds. Here lies the secret of all the indecision, hesitancy and confusion that marks the action of the Congress.

In spite of the fact that British domination hinders the progress of all classes, it is the working masses which have proved and are bound to be the most revolutionary. The experience of the last several years has demonstrated this fact. The upper and middle classes can gain something by compromising with the imperial overlord. Their material interests are not altogether incompatible with one another. The capitalist imperialism of Britain is based on the exploitation of the toiling masses, the upper and middle classes being put to some handicap incidentally. The prosperity of the native upper and middle classes will not be built so much at the expense of the imperialist monopoly as by the extended right to exploit the masses. Consequently, it is not impossible for the foreign and native exploiting classes to come to an agreement as to the proportionate share in the exploitation of the labour power and natural resources of the country. This being the case, it is clear why a deep-seated revolutionary spirit can be found only in one social class, viz the exploited and expropriated masses, including

the pauperised, semi-intellectual lower middle class. This is the foundation of the revolutionary nationalist movement, whose leadership the Congress ought to assume, should it desire to be anything else than the Liberal League, and not be annexed to it in course of time.

The time has arrived when it is essential for the Congress to clarify its social affiliation and political orientation. It (should make) a thorough weeding of its ranks in order that these can be consolidated as the rallying ground of only those inspired by a sincere revolutionary will. In short the Congress stands in need of a clearly defined political programme, first of all. Then there must be formulated a new programme of action in accordance with the character of the social forces available for carrying out this programme through. Lastly, all impossible or impractical methods should be discarded.

The cardinal principle of our political programme is a national democratic government free from any foreign protection or supervision.

In the action programme are to be formulated the methods by which all revolutionary forces will be mobilised in the struggle for realising the establishment of an Indian republic. This mobilisation cannot be effected unless the immediate needs of the most revolutionary element, that is the working class, are taken into consideration. As demonstrated above, the complete national independence of India can be realised only by the efforts of the workers and peasants. Therefore, to develop their revolutionary consciousness is the burden of our programme of action.

The ignorant workers and peasants do not understand political theories any more than they care for spiritual abstractions. They want to satisfy their hunger, to have the intensity and brutality of exploitation modified. Their economic condition has become unbearable, so they are driven to revolt. Therefore the best means of leading them on in the revolutionary path is to help them in the struggle for their immediate needs; to help them organise; to make them understand their class interests; to encourage them in every revolutionary way and to warn them against the

conspiracy of the "labour leaders" who are the henchmen of the employing class or the agents of the government. The enemy knows where lies the great danger; he is busy in the field in order to deflect the working class from the political movement for national liberation; because divorced from this objective revolutionary force, the nationalist movement will be impotent and it will be easy to liquidate it for the time being by throwing a few bones of concessions to the capitalists and the office-hunting intellectuals. The working class has been abused, exploited, denounced and betrayed by the Congress, which never paid any attention to the removal of its immediate grievances. Now, at this psychological moment, have stepped in the government as well as the most advanced section of the employers and landlords. Reformist labour legislations are being prepared and passed, plans are made for improving the living condition of the city workers. Trade unions are being organised under the leadership of officially inspired men; peasant cooperatives are being formed under the patronage of the district officers; village reform associations are being started with the help of benevolent zamindars. These are ominous signs and should be duly noticed. All these are done with the purpose of checking the rising tide of mass revolt. A little improvement in their present miserable conditions will put the working class to sleep, will pacify the acuteness of their fury, and increase their faith in reformism and the benevolence of the government and the employer. Thus the forces of revolution will be temporarily controlled, and the movement for national liberation consequently crushed.

Our immediate task is to prevent this eventuality; to frustrate this sinister design of the government, leagued with the employing and landowning class. We must assume the leadership of the working class, and we will not be able to drive the kept labour leaders out of the field unless we are actuated by revolutionary ideals—unless we stand for the interests of the toiling masses. The Congress should at once launch a programme advocating the fight for higher wages for the workers, an eight-hour day, better housing, recognition of unions, right of strike, equal pay for equal

work, abolition of landlordism, reduction of rents and taxes, strong measures for the abolition of usury and such other measures as will correspond to the immediate necessities of the masses. Vigorous agitation should be carried on among the workers and peasants to show that their condition cannot be changed by palliatives, to expose the sinister designs of the reformist labour leader, liberal employer and benevolent landlord. These demands should be enforced by mass action, strikes, demonstrations, peasant revolts. Leaving the cloth shop and liquor stall alone, every Congress volunteer should take active part in these mass demonstrations.

This is the only means of creating a situation fit for the inauguration of civil disobedience. Not by denouncing them, betraying them, but by making their cause its own will the Congress assume the leadership of the masses. By realising this organic relation with the only revolutionary social class, the Congress will be on the right path and will march from one victory to another till the ultimate goal is attained.

Hoist the banner of swaraj and rally the people under it with the slogan of living wages to the worker and land to the toiler.

M. N. ROY

15 July 1922

SURENDRA NATH KAR

(A copy of this was enclosed in No. 5, 15 July 1922. The text here is taken from *One Year of Noncooperation*, Chapter VI.)

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(1) RUSSIAN RELIEF

We hope the appeal issued by the Indian Trade Union Congress on behalf of the hungry millions of Russia will be responded to. None else can sympathise with the Russians than the people. But nothing so far has been done to give an active expression to this sympathy; on the contrary vicious propaganda has been carried on to the effect that the Bolsheviks are responsible for this miserable plight of Russia, and therefore nothing can be done to improve it until the Bolsheviks are driven out. Consequently, if the

Trade Union Congress will collect any considerable relief for the Russian famine it is necessary to do something more than to issue a simple appeal. The wrong ideas about the Russian revolution and its effect on the Russian people should be dispelled. The campaign of malicious lies must be combated by the publication of authentic information. This has to be done because the bankrupt economic condition of the Indian working class prevents it from contributing anything substantial to the relief fund, which will have to secure the backing of the middle classes. The minds of these have been very much poisoned by wrong information supplied by the agents of imperialism and propagated by the Indian press. Thus the Trade Union Congress by issuing the appeal has assumed a responsibility, the proper discharge of which will justify its claim to represent the toiling masses of India.

(No. 7, 15 August 1922)

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(m) A WORLD CONGRESS

The Fourth World Congress of the Communist International will be held in Moscow on the 7th of November, the anniversary of the Russian revolution. The representatives of the revolutionary working class of all the countries will assemble in this international congress to discuss the ways and means of conducting the struggle against capitalist and imperialist domination. Unlike its predecessors, the Communist International does not confine its sphere of action within the limits of the countries of Europe and America. It embraces the toiling masses of the entire world. The previous congresses have been attended by representatives from the Asiatic countries, side by side with those from Europe and America. In view of the fact that the problems before the subject peoples of the East are not the same as those of the western working class, special congresses have been held from time to time. The Congress of the Peoples of the East held at Baku in August 1920 and the Congress of the Far Eastern Toiling Masses held in Moscow in February this year are the most important ones.

The revolutionary movement in Turkey, Persia, Egypt, China, Korea, Japan and even the Dutch Indies maintain close connection with the Communist International, whose main pillar is the working class of Europe and America. The latter is struggling to liberate itself from the yoke of capitalism, which in the form of imperialism exploits the subject peoples in the colonial and "protected" countries. Consequently, it is necessary that both the elements exploited by the same agency should come together, in order to overthrow the common enemy by a joint effort. The understanding of this necessity has drawn the revolutionaries of many a subject country within the ranks of the Communist International, which is the general staff of the world proletariat engaged in a historic struggle for building up a new society on the ruins of the present, based on the right of exploitation of man by man. The days of revolutions on a purely national scale and with a purely national ideal are gone. Civilisation has reduced the size of the world. Peoples are very closely related together politically, economically and even militarily. A grave change in one country affects many others in greater or lesser degree. Therefore, the struggle of the subject nationalities, in spite of their historic importance, has become an integral part of the worldwide class struggle, which is the most outstanding feature of contemporary history. The entire human society today stands divided into two hostile camps—exploiter and exploited. This class antagonism has always been the characteristic of civilised society. In fact "human history is a history of class struggle". But this class antagonism has never been more naked, more brutal than it is today. The whole world is involved directly or indirectly in the great sweep of this struggle between the exploiting class of all the countries on one side and the toiling masses on the other. The vertical divisions of nationality, race, religion, etc. are submerged in this great horizontal cleavage, which is growing wider and wider every day.

Those involved in a national struggle must take their stand on the side of the exploited masses, because both of them are pitted against the same enemy. But in the ranks

of the subject people struggling for freedom, there are elements whose existence and prosperity rests on the right of exploitation. These elements are naturally against joining hands with the international army of the revolutionary working class. But by so doing they forfeit their claim to lead the fight of national revolution, because by opposing the interests of the working class they identify themselves with the imperialists. In every subject country there are such elements, which stand in the way of a union between the national revolutionary movement in the colonial countries with the working class of the West. Thus we see, that although in our nationalist ranks there is a cry for foreign propaganda in order to secure moral and even material help for our fight for freedom, the very name of the Communist International or the Russian revolution—of which latter is not a local affair, but one of world import—is practically forbidden. Many of our leaders have outdone the British ruling class in holding up the bogey of Bolshevism. The latest phase of this stupid agitation is the fuss made over the *Morning Post* report about the Russian gold. But the truly revolutionary elements—those not restricted by any consideration of vested interest, but inspired with the object of a complete national liberation of the Indian people—must have a wider vision. They must know that the interest of the majority of the Indian people should not be sacrificed for that of a few on the top. And the untrammelled social and economic progress of the masses of our people demands, first of all, complete national independence. This cannot be attained without the active cooperation, moral, political and even material, of the organised revolutionary forces of the world.

Consequently, no Indian revolutionary can be indifferent to the coming world congress, which must be attended by representatives of the revolutionary people of India fighting for national emancipation. It is not unprecedented for Indian nationalists to be present in international socialist congresses. Almost all the congresses of the Second International, which proved to be no better than the imperialist bourgeoisie on the outbreak of the European war, were

attended by Indian nationalists looking for sympathy. Seldom they were listened to. And when men like Dadabhai Naoroji imposed his personality upon the indifferent social democratic theoreticians, some half-hearted resolutions of sympathy were passed by a gathering utterly oblivious of the questions touched by such resolutions. Today the situation is altogether changed. The revolutionary leaders of the western proletariat extend their comradely hand to the subject peoples. They are not doing it in a spirit of humanitarianism, nor are they content with expressing platonic sympathy. They want to have close union in an active struggle. The ways and means for this union are discussed in the congress of the Communist International with as much earnestness as is devoted to the question relating to the struggle in their respective countries.

Specially should this congress be attended by those who have undertaken the task of leading the workers and peasants of India. These leaders of the Indian working class need much education in order to be able to solve the problem before them. They should not miss one opportunity that brings them in contact with those who have acquired immense experience in the course of a long struggle. For all the reasons it is very necessary that representatives of the revolutionary people of India should come to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

M. N. Roy

(No 8, 1 September 1922.)

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(n) "GANDHI VERSUS LENIN"—BY S. A. DANGE

Of all the flood of new literature embodying the new ideas that the renaissance of Indian life and letters has brought about, few are more interesting or significant than this little brochure of Mr Dange on the two opposing principles of the twentieth century which he rightly embodies in the two contrasting personalities of Gandhi and Lenin. Individualism or collectivism, anarchism or socialism, the man vs the state are the general concepts which Mr Dange has narrowed down to the two outstand-

ing personalities embodying these two conflicting and opposing principles. Had his book been termed "Gandhism versus Leninism" it would have done better in bringing out the idea that it is not *two persons* but two eternally opposed *principles* that stand so strikingly in conflict today in those two countries which border on each other, whose people and problems are so similar but which form the antithesis of one another in the present revolutionary crisis. Gandhi, but for his transcendent personality, represents in the broad aspect of the world struggle the principle of anarchy, laissez faire and individual liberty which in its ultimate conclusion has brought civilised mankind to its present horrible condition of extreme wealth and extreme poverty, of the contradictions between capital and labour, where the only solution should be a radical one of social revolution. Lenin for all the dominance of his mighty personality embodies the principle of socialism which in militant action is called communism, and which today represents the only possible avenue of escape and reconstruction for mankind from the present chaos.

In grasping the essential conflict between these two principles and in glimpsing in the Russian revolution a mighty prototype for all the future revolutions of this century, just as the French revolution was in its age, Mr Dange has proved himself a good student of history, and he is the more to be congratulated on his insight because of the fact that scarcity of information has rendered the great majority of Indians blind to this transcendent phenomenon. In so far as his ignorance of actual facts permits, the author makes on the whole a correct analysis of the principles underlying the Russian revolution. Mr Dange, perhaps without being aware of it himself, is a socialist who gauges the present Indian crisis in terms of the struggle between capital and labour. He speaks the truth when he says the following words:

"There is one remedy. It lies in the hands of Indian labour. If, at the extreme moment, Indian labour refuses to work in a solid mass—our success will be assured."

Mr Dange has foreseen the great necessity in the present

crisis, of the organisation of Indian labour for a general strike which will paralyse the government. If he flinches from the logical conclusion of such an act which would inevitably result in an armed conflict, that is revolution, it is because his theoretical development is still incomplete, his ideas are still confused. But Mr Dange is on the right road and greater study of revolutions, past and present, as well as continued analysis of the Indian situation from the standpoint of historical materialism, will correct his present error of logic. We recommend him to read the books reviewed in these columns, to master theoreticians and revolutionaries of our epoch and to apply their teachings to India. Only thus will the age-long intellectual isolation of India be broken and our own school of ideological revolution evolved.

(No 8, 1 September 1922)

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(o) A NIGHTMARE

Since the beginning of the year, a number of big strikes have taken place. The Assam-Bengal Railway and River Steam Navigation Company strikes in connection with the exodus of the tea garden coolies, the East Indian Railway strike, Calcutta seamen's strike and the jute mill workers' strike are the most prominent of them. These strikes, in spite of the fact that all of them were lost, were definitely working class movements and indicated the beginning of a new phase of the developing labour struggle. Our workers are rapidly becoming conscious of their class interest and are not slow in learning to lead their own fight. On the other hand, the collapse of the noncooperation propaganda based predominantly upon middle class support has convinced a growing section of the declassed revolutionaries of the urgent necessity of throwing in their lot with the working class. This revolutionary element is promising conscious and intelligent leadership to the working class, and has contributed much to the great strikes of the last half a year. This inevitable attraction of the pauperised intellectuals towards the cause of the working class struggle holds

out serious prospects, because this union of the two revolutionary elements will pave the way for the organisation of a political party of the masses. The rise of such a party will open up a new stage in the national struggle—a stage which will inaugurate an unrelenting, uncompromising fight to the finish. No wonder the government as well as the propertied classes are shouting about the hand of the political agitator behind every serious industrial strike. But these shouts will not prevent the objectively revolutionary forces from gravitating together. Every economic struggle is a political struggle. The working class, including the landless peasantry, cannot be freed economically so long as the political power is vested in the propertied classes. This is more so in India, where the struggle for national liberation overshadows all other struggles: therefore all efforts should be bent first to secure the political freedom of the nation, since this freedom will give unrestricted scope for the development of the social revolutionary forces making for more fundamental aspects of the struggle. The national war will be waged in India side by side with the class war. The development of the latter will strengthen the former. The growing consciousness of the working class, coupled with the intelligent leadership of the revolutionary intellectuals are stiffening the class struggle. It was demonstrated in the last strikes. The cry against the political agitators is meant to strengthen the hands of the kept labour leaders, who will try to keep the unions safe from revolutionary leadership. But the latter will entrench itself in the ranks of the working class by virtue of its revolutionary character and by its ability to develop the class consciousness of the masses by leading them under the conditions of actual fight, first in the economic field, then in the political field.

(No. 9, 15 September 1922.)

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(p) ON THE WRONG TRACK

The memorandum of the Bengal Trade Union Federation to the Government of India concerning the status and registration of trade unions contains several good points; but

this document in general is written by persons who do not admit the class character of the labour movement. The reformist mind of these labour leaders fails to see that the antagonism between the employer and employed cannot be reconciled by legislation. Neither do they seem to recognise the impossibility of protecting the rights of labour by laws while the legislation and execution of such laws remains the exclusive privilege of the propertied classes. Nor will this situation be changed by granting the franchise to the working class. The experience of democratic countries like England, France, Germany, etc. is example of such impossibility.

The trade union is fundamentally a class organisation. Its function is to protect the interests of the wage earner against the exploitation of the employer. Consequently, its mission cannot be fulfilled within the limits set by laws of the capitalist state. The ultimate goal of a genuine working class organisation is the overthrow of the capitalist system, which divides the society into wage slaves and employers. The trade union is the first form of working class organisation. In the first stages of the class struggle, trade unions play an important role. But such unions are formed as the organised expression of working class demands, and not as constitutional or charitable associations, brought into being with the permission of the ruling class operating through the state. The executive of the Bengal Trade Union Federation appears to hold the latter view of unionism. Therefore we read in its memorandum such a statement as: "My committee is in entire agreement with the suggestion of the government that every facility should be offered for the development of labour organisations along *healthy lines* and the steady betterment of the conditions of labour by efforts from within." By endorsing the government suggestion that labour organisations should be helped to grow along "healthy lines", the executive of the federation gives itself entirely away. It shows its characteristic hostility to unionism based on the principles of class struggle. If there is still any doubt left about the employing class mentality of the labour leaders on the executive of the federation, the

following sentence in its memorandum dissipates it altogether. In this sentence the "right" and "duty" of the government to "protect and guide" the trade unions by means of legal responsibilities imposed on them (the unions) is clearly conceded. Having thus made the unions an object of official paternalism, the executive of the federation proceeds to take exception to certain technicalities which matter very little, once the real class character of labour organisation is repudiated.

Instead of squarely demanding the recognition of all labour organisations as authoritative organs of the working class, the committee sidetracks itself on the legal technicalities concerning the registration of unions. In its initial stages, the labour movement in every country had to fight for the recognition of unions. The same has to be done in India. But as everywhere else, this recognition will be conquered by the Indian worker, not by the grace of the government, but by his revolutionary efforts in form of strikes, demonstrations, sabotage, riots and other forms of direct action on the grounds of class struggle. The federation leaders seek for protection, but what is needed by the worker is recognition. The unions must have, not an official protectorate, but class freedom, which cannot be attained without a fight.

On the question of the "right of strike" the committee takes a very reprehensible position. It makes of this revolutionary action a question of ethics and legality. It altogether ignores the fact that strikes are but the active manifestation of the perpetual antagonism inherent in the capitalist system. Therefore, it argues with the employing class about the right of the worker to strike when no agreement could be reached through arbitration and conciliation boards. But the employing class does not fight strikes on the ground of justice, but with police, guns and incendiarism. The right of strike can be conquered only by strikes. Solicitations and ethical considerations are of no avail.

Under the guidance of such leadership, the young working class movement is being driven into the wrong track. Revolutionary leadership with a clear conception of the

class struggle is needed. Such leadership must come out of the ranks of the advanced workers or declassed intellectuals.

(No. 9, 15 September 1922.)

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(q) THE COLLAPSE OF EXTREMISM

A reshuffling of forces is the most outstanding feature of our movement at the present moment. Various social elements, which have been operating together within the folds of the Congress, cannot be held together any longer. The background of social confusion, on which the noncooperation movement was reared, has been undergoing a steady process of clarification brought about by the development of the economic motives which involved these various classes into a conglomerate movement.

Since the moderates, representing the upper classes including the landlords, industrial capitalists and rich intellectuals engaged in liberal professions, were lured away by the reforms, the Congress became the political organ of middle class. This was so as a result of the logic of social economics. The reforms satisfied, at least temporarily, the ambitions of the upper classes. The most galling of the disabilities imposed upon capitalist development were removed: imperial capital, forced by necessities created in consequence of the world situation, showed an inclination of conceding the Indian investors a place in the sun; accommodation was made for the upper strata of the intellectuals in the higher grade of the public services; and the prospect of more political power was opened before the eyes of the large property-holding class. But none of these reforms affected in any way the economic position of the middle class. The prospective aggrandisement of the rich intellectuals did not promise any amelioration to those eking out a miserable existence in the back benches of the bar, or behind the counter of the small trader, or in the ill-paid educational service of the lower grade, or to the thousands and thousands of students with a positively dark future staring them in the face. While the Congress was still under the control of moderates, the standard of extrem-

ism was raised by the spokesmen of, these lower middle class elements. On the debacle of the old guard, these lower middle class extremists came to power and imposed upon the Congress their ideology. The noncooperation movement was actuated by lower middle class ideals. No revolutionary principle making for a social readjustment nor even for a radical political solution was to be found in it. In essence it was but the sulking action of the dissatisfied, smarting under its own impotency. "The reforms did not concede anything to us; we will try to obstruct them." Such was the attitude of the lower middle class, betrayed by the liberals, and who were the guiding spirit of the noncooperation movement.

But from the very beginning, there existed two distinct and conflicting social tendencies within the folds of the noncooperation movement. One was the direct descendent of the extremists in the old Congress camp and the other was the new incumbent pushed into the political arena by the development of a new revolutionary force, namely the awakening mass energy. By intellectual training, political conviction and social affiliation, the former belonged to the same class as those bought over by the reforms. Consequently it did not like to go so far away as would make the journey back impossible. Hence the opposition to certain clauses of the noncooperation resolution when it was first drafted. The latter tendency, which was in ascendancy in the heyday of the noncooperation campaign, expressed the real lower middle class outlook on life. Not having a conviction of its own, it was driven from the pillar to post. Its political programme was on the whole nonexistent, and the rudimentary shreds of it to be found here and there were conspicuous for indecision and vagueness. Closely connected with the village, it was conservative in its economic aspect. In every way it lived in the dead past, oblivious of the revolutionary upheaval all around.

Two elements of such a conflicting nature cannot go hand in hand very far. The extremism of the former was political radicalism actuated by modern ideals. The nationalism of the latter, on the contrary, is decidedly re-

actionary fed upon old religious concepts. The only thing common to both is the abhorrence to revolutionary development. The former is too timid, too limited in its outlook, in short, too bourgeois to court anything revolutionary; while the latter is decidedly antirevolutionary, because it stands on a social foundation which will be made untenable by a revolution. A negative ideal is not binding for ever. The break has occurred.

A duel is going on between the two forces: one representing the progressive tendencies in the upper middle class, the other embodying the lower strata of the same social class steeped in religious prejudices, economic conservatism, intellectual bankruptcy and a spirit of reaction in general. This duel is fought over the leadership of the Congress. The latter dominated the political movement during the last two years because, in spite of itself, it rode on the rising tide of mass revolt. In its attempt to stir up reactionary nationalism of a religious brand, it called in the forces of mass revolt, which powerful factor of social dynamics lent it temporarily a very imposing appearance. The former, that is the progressive strata of the middle class, threw in its lot with this movement, because there was no other place for it. On the one hand, the reforms excluded it. On the other, the political movement was dominated by the reactionaries. The space in the centre was narrowed down to an insignificant and negligent factor. It was not enviable to stand there. Hence the alliance of the two such incompatible forces.

But as was to be expected, the reactionary nationalism of the lower middle class has succumbed in the fierce clash of revolution and reaction. Today it is practically swept off the board of the political movement. It attracted the attention of the world and the adherence of the "pragmatic politicians" of the middle class by virtue of the fact that it was riding on the high horse of revolution. It did not make any difference that it committed the crime unwittingly. But the time came when it grew horrified at the indecent scene and tried to pull in the horse running at break-neck speed. The result was disastrous for one and deplorable for

the other. It was disastrous for the rider, who was thrown off the majestic saddle down the precipice of obscurity; while the sudden frantic cry for halt dazed and puzzled the horse, which, as it were, fell into a torpor after the first wild dash and today runs the risk of being harnessed in the gilded chains of an orderly and constitutional movement, to be driven along the respectable road of reformism.

This is a temporary setback for the revolutionary forces, which could be so easily dissipated because their subjective counterpart has not developed as yet, thus leaving them at the mercy of opportunist leadership. It is temporary, but none the less deplorable. Now begins a new act of the drama with pragmatic politicians of the extremist school occupying the centre of the stage. Will they make a better show? Certainly not. Middle class extremism does not go very far, because it is divorced from the dynamics of revolutionary mass energy. If the religious nationalists misled and betrayed the masses with reactionary pacifism, the middle class extremists are sublimely indifferent to them. They count more upon statics than upon dynamics. Hence the collapse of this type of extremism is a foregone conclusion. In fact it is already collapsing. A movement started in opposition to certain tactics which meant an all round retreat cannot be relied upon for anything spectacular, when all it can promise to do is to execute the self-same retreat in an orderly manner.

It is evident that the opposition led by the Mahatma Party is not in any way inclined towards revolutionary tactics in the place of those of indecision and hesitancy. The Congress programme as formulated at Bardoli and ratified at Delhi is to be revised. This is the demand. But what will be the new programme? The suggestions in this respect are altogether negative. Certain clauses, those opposed by the upper middle class leaders at Nagpur, are to be given up as impractical. Some go so far as to repudiate the whole theory of noncooperation, and adopt the curious doctrine of "responsive cooperation" in its stead. In order to make it somewhat distinguishable from the programme of the liberal party, it is often called "responsive noncooperation"

which is still more curious, because it does not mean anything. There is some sense in the theory that we will co-operate with the government under conditions; that is, we will respond to every act of concession by our cooperation. But noncooperation can never be "responsive"; it can only be retaliatory. These are but word-mongering to conceal the real motive, which is to be abandon noncooperation in so far as it affects the upper middle class.

Such is the way of middle class extremism. It is a misnomer because it always avoids going to the extreme. To stand in the centre is its habit. On the one hand the doors of the kingdom of heaven, where the upper classes are admitted by the courtesy of the imperial ruler, are closed to it; on the other hand belonging to the propertied classes it is opposed to going all the way over to the revolutionary masses. Had the present opposition been any more revolutionary than the leadership which it aspires to replace, it would step in where the latter failed. If Bardoli programme is to be revised, it should be done, not in order to go back upon all the activities whose inevitable consequences forced the religious nationalists to show their reactionary colour, but in order to intensify those activities which were stopped by that silly edict called the constructive programme. The Bardoli resolutions were not forced upon the Congress as a natural consequence of the so-called impracticability of the noncooperation programme; they were adopted by the terrified, bewildered and reactionary leadership unwilling to proceed on the road of revolution following the logical consequences of a movement much bigger than itself. The error of Bardoli will not be ratified by the lawyers resuming their practice nor by entering the councils on the principle of responsive cooperation. The errors of Bardoli can only be rectified by casting aside the so-called constructive programme as a counter-revolutionary document and declaring a militant programme of action in its place. The middle class extremists have not the least intention of doing so. They want to have a gratification of affixing MLCs to their names; they want to resume the lucrative practice in the courts. They want to have their children qualified for

government positions. But they are deadly against lifting the more pernicious bans declared from Bardoli. The bans put upon mass action. The edict prohibiting the hungry and exploited workers and peasants the right to rise in revolt. But let them not forget that they followed on the heels of the orthodox noncooperation leaders so long as the latter held control of the masses. Today they are wisely criticising the methods of noncooperation because it has become impotent by cutting itself asunder from the dynamics of mass upheaval. But neither the talks of practical politics nor the outbursts of vapoury extremism will avail unless the new leadership boldly repudiates the reactionary character of the noncooperation movement and steps in where it so miserably failed. But the middle class centrists are utterly incapable of taking such a revolutionary step, their wordy extremism notwithstanding.

So will the struggle for national liberation remain stuck in the morass of reaction, impotency and hesitation?

No. The days of reactionary religious nationalism are gone. The centrist extremism of the middle class has collapsed before it is gone. The leadership of the future is left for those ardent and courageous revolutionaries who will undertake the task of organising the mass party—the political party of workers and peasants—the only social element objectively revolutionary and whose interest can never be protected by half-way measures of reform and compromise.

MANABENDRA NATH ROY

(No. 9, 15 September 1922)

4. "The Political Situation in India" by M. N. Roy

Confusion in the National Congress

The arrest of Gandhi has at last let loose the various conflicting economic interests and social tendencies that were knit in a superficial unity in the National Congress under the personal influence of Gandhi. A great confusion and the inevitable disintegration are the two most outstanding features of the Indian movement today. It has arrived at the close of one period, but has not as yet found its way into the next. In order best to understand the present situation it is necessary to make a short review of the past months which directly led up to it.

The magnificent demonstrations and mass strikes during the visit of the Prince of Wales brought into relief two facts, viz the growing rebellious spirit of the masses, and the unwillingness of the nationalist leaders, above all Gandhi, to develop or even to countenance this spirit which spelt revolution. The Ahmedabad congress met in an extremely revolutionary period, but it was not governmental repressions, which had already been started with the arrest of the President-elect C. R. Das, Lajpat Rai, Ali brothers and other influential leaders, but the timidity of the leadership which turned it into a tame, impotent show.

It was an instance of rank betrayal of the revolutionary forces by the bourgeois leadership. While throughout the length and breadth of the country mass demonstrations were challenging the state's authority to preserve law and order, the Congress harped on the tune of nonviolence, and denounced the revolutionary action of the masses as "rowdism" and "forces of evil". Instead of adopting a fighting programme, embracing the redress of the immediate grievances of the workers and peasants, thus to involve them more consciously and actively in the struggle, the Ahmedabad congress adopted the so-called "constructive programme" which was nothing less than a repudiation of all revolutionary preparations. This "constructive programme" was prefaced by summary abandonment of the tactics of noncooperation as well as of the powerful slogan of civil disobedience given out but a few weeks before the congress met at Ahmedabad, which slogan was very enthusiastically responded to by the poor peasantry, because it corresponded to their economic needs. The Congress through the mouth of its elected dictator, Gandhi, declared that civil disobedience could not be declared until there was a "perfect atmosphere of nonviolence in the country". This decision of Ahmedabad was corroborated by the Working Committee of the Congress in its session held at Bardoli, a district in Gujarat which had been chosen by Gandhi as the first place where civil disobedience should be started under his personal supervision. The Bardoli resolution, which suspended all revolutionary activities, included the following clauses which left no doubt whatsoever as to the social affiliation of the Congress leadership. It was resolved at Bardoli:

Clause 1: The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura in having brutally murdered constables and wantonly burned police thana (station).

Clause 2: In view of the violent outbreaks every time mass civil disobedience is inaugurated, indicating that the country is not nonviolent enough, the Working Committee of the Congress resolves that mass civil disobedience... be

suspended, and instructs the local congress committees to advise the cultivators to pay land revenue and other taxes due to the government and to suspend every other activity of an offensive character.

Clause 3: The suspension of mass civil disobedience shall be continued until the atmosphere is so nonviolent as to insure the nonrepetition of atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or of the hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras on the 17th of November and the 13th of January.

Clause 5: All volunteer processions and public meetings for the defiance of authority should be stopped...

Clause 6: The Working Committee advises Congress workers and organisations to inform the ryots (peasants) that withholding rent payment to the zamindars (landlords) is contrary to the Congress resolutions and injurious to the best interests of the country.

Clause 7: The Working Committee assures the zamindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights and that even where the ryots have grievances, the committee desires that redress be sought by mutual consultation and arbitration.

The "atrocities" and "hooliganism" referred to in clause 3 were the uprisings of the poor peasantry against the landlords, and the magnificent mass strikes with which the prince was greeted.

The following are the outstanding clauses of the so-called "constructive programme" adopted in place of militant noncooperation and civil disobedience:

(1) To enlist 10,000,000 members of the Congress, all to believe in nonviolence and truth as indispensable for swaraj (home rule).

(2) To popularise the charkha (spinning wheel) and khaddar (homespun). All Congress workers should dress in khaddar and learn to spin.

(3) To organise national schools; but no picketing of government schools.

(4) To uplift the depressed classes.

(5) To organise a social service department to promote

unity among all classes and races. This department is to render help to all in time of illness or accident.

This is the programme with which the Congress wants to lead the movement for national liberation. The consequences of such impotency are inevitable and were not long in making themselves felt in the movement.

A perusal of the Bardoli resolution and the sayings of Gandhi and other leaders do not permit one even to suspect that it might have been a caution against government provocation. The reasons for the shameful retreat are clearly and blandly stated. The interests of the propertied class must have first consideration: British rule may be "satanic", but landlordism is sacred.

The Arrest of Gandhi and After

The absence of any serious demonstration to protest against the arrest of the Ali brothers revealed the weakness of the hold that the Khilafat cry had on the Moslem masses. The visit of the Prince of Wales in such a perilous period was contrived in order to measure the strength of the movement; so also was the policy of Reading in arresting a number of influential leaders of the Congress. The object of the government was realised; the cleavage between the masses and the leadership was revealed. Consequently there was no risk in coming down upon the Congress with a heavy hand of repression. This was done. Even Gandhi, whose post-Ahmedabad activities were more helpful to government than anything else, was not spared, evidently to vindicate the prestige of imperialism. The bourgeois character of the Congress had alienated it so much from the masses by the time Gandhi, the idol of the Indian people, was arrested that such a monstrous action of repression, to commit which even the British government hesitated for months, created hardly a ripple of indignant demonstration in the country. The venerated Mahatma was arrested and sent to jail for six years; sentimental speeches were made to pay homage to the martyred saint and patriot; implicit faithfulness was professed to follow the line indicated by him; but what was remarkable, what

revealed the real state of the movement, was the absence of any spontaneous mass demonstrations like those which had taken place in the country at the least provocation during the last several years. The remnant of the Congress leadership consoled themselves and their rather disconcerted following with the argument that the Mahatma exhorted the people to remain absolutely nonviolent on his arrest. But instances are not rare when such exhortations of the Mahatma, even his personal presence, could not stem the tide of mass action. The wave of mass revolt that swept the country following upon the hartal (national strike) called during the prince's visit, as well as in consequence of the slogan of civil disobedience, is still fresh in the memory. All remonstrance, bidding and denunciations of the Mahatma were of no avail.

The removal of Gandhi marked the termination of the period in which the movement could be carried on with a vague undefined programme. It was possible formerly, because the socio-economic consciousness of the various social factors participating in the anti-British movement had not been yet sufficiently clarified. Therefore all these incompatible, even antagonistic, elements could have the appearance of being united in a common political struggle. But the most prominent class line was revealed when at the Ahmedabad congress, Gandhi set his face against the revolutionary action of the masses on one hand, and on the other declared the necessity of making common cause with moderates, that is, the political party which consciously advocated the economic and political aggrandisement of the native capitalists and landlords. Since then the reshuffling of forces in the Indian national movement has been going on. The bourgeoisie is so much terrified that it has been of late openly declaring its hostility to the interests of the toiling masses. This attitude naturally does not make for the unity of the political anti-British movement, and is not slow to produce pernicious results.

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The Provincial Conferences

The various political tendencies inside the Congress organisation, tendencies which have been released by the removal of the personality of Gandhi—too much respect for whom tied the hand and sealed the mouth of many a recalcitrant—came into evidence in various provincial conferences held in the latter part of April. All these conferences (Bengal, Maharashtra, Central Provinces and Berar) with the exception of Punjab, which met during a veritable reign of terror telling particularly heavily upon the Sikh peasants (Akalis), were conspicuous by the presence of two tendencies equally actuated by bourgeois ideals and orientations. The powerful revolutionary forces, expressed through the workers' and peasants' movements, had very little access to the deliberation and resolutions of these conferences. Strikes, trade unions and peasant revolts were not given any place in the speeches and resolutions, except to denounce them and conjure them up as forces of anarchy threatening the existence of the British government and the native propertied class alike (speech of J. M. Sen Gupta as the chairman of the reception committee of the Bengal provincial conference).

One of the two political tendencies is decidedly bourgeois and either openly or in thinly veiled language advocates a fusion of forces with the moderates who stand for cooperation or, in other words, compromise with the imperialist overlord. The other is petty bourgeois extremism utterly incapable of understanding the present situation, therefore heading towards an intellectual rut divorced from the pragmatic politics of the bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the dynamics of mass energy on the other.

It is the latter tendency that has raised the voice of protest against Gandhism and attempts to drag the Congress out of the quagmire of metaphysical politics. In Maharashtra, Central Provinces and Berar there has developed a strong leftwing which demands the revision of the so-called "constructive programme". In the conferences this new opposition found itself still in the minority, but succeeded in forcing the appointment of subcommittees in

order to investigate the achievements and failures of the Congress as well as to suggest changes in the Congress programme if necessary such as (1) swadeshi (indigenous machine-industry) instead of charkha and khaddar; (2) organisation of volunteers for physical exercise and social service; (3) to send propagandists to foreign countries; (4) establish technical schools; (5) enter the councils as opposition. Some of these subcommittees, specially that of Nagpur (Central Provinces), had made reports recommending total repudiation of the Ahmedabad and Bardoli resolutions; but the new programme they suggest is no more revolutionary than the former. If the one was impractical or metaphysical, the other is reformistic, in spite of its wordy extremism, which has absolutely no potentiality on account of lacking a social foundation. Consequently this incipient leftwing opposition cannot do anything but fumble in the darkness of futile petty bourgeois extremism.

Other Tendencies in the Movement

The secret terrorist groups, which never accepted the leadership of the Congress and which were almost exterminated by the wholesale arrests during the war, are also appearing in the field. They have been gradually collecting their scattered forces since repression was somewhat relaxed after the inauguration of the reforms and on account of the fact that the attention of the government was attracted towards noncooperation movement which involved the wide masses of people. The resuscitated remnants of the secret societies, however, still cling to the belief in their old tactics whose efficacy has been put to the test and could not pass the examination. All the revolutionary forces of the country having been involved in the Congress movement, no scope was left for these elements who, however, kept out of the Congress simply because they did not believe in the latter's tactics, particularly the faith in nonviolence. But this aloofness has been broken lately and many of them have joined the Congress organisations individually although as a revolutionary tendency they insisted on maintaining their separate existence. This individual participation has gone

so far that, according to the latest information received, in the province of Bengal, where the secret societies had been the strongest, a majority of the local Congress organisations is controlled by ex-members of terrorist organisations. These people are in the Congress activities because they have been incapable of evolving by themselves a better or more effective method of struggle. They expected that something would come of the noncooperation movement: but when noncooperation was wrecked on the rock of nonviolence, they could offer nothing constructive but simply point out that violence was needed. Now during this period of readjustment, these elements are showing signs of activity which is, however, still far from what is suitable to the situation. Organisations are being formed for propaganda and education among the masses; but the propaganda and education aimed at by these organisations are not revolutionary, but actuated by reformist ideas fomented by despair. Anyhow, there is a search for new ideas, new methods of struggle which will be able to push the movement out of the rut it is now in. To bring about the union of these declassed intellectuals with the workers' and peasants' movement is the immediate task. There is a movement to go to the village but the idea behind this movement is wrong. This movement needs revolutionary impetus.

Various journals have come out embodying this new extra-Congress tendency. These journals are mostly written in vernacular languages and aim at combating some of the impossible tactics and metaphysical preoccupations of the Congress groups looking for new inspiration, new political horizon are being gathered round these ideological standards.

than the National Congress. But the relaxation of political enthusiasm was already to be noticed. The great demonstration with which the Trade Union Congress met was more of an economic than political character. The leadership was very questionable. But the National Congress in its great concern over the countrywide mass upheaval failed or refused to take notice of this new tendency in the labour movement. The only way was to launch an action programme which would include the fight for improving the immediate material condition of the working class. But the Ahmedabad congress started on a path which led farther and farther from the workers and peasants. Thus the leadership of the most important revolutionary social factor was left at the mercy of opportunist politicians, petty bourgeois reformers and government agents.

The Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress, which met almost simultaneously with the political conference of the same district, showed that the trade unions and the labour movement as a whole had been almost completely divorced from the political movement and had come under the uncontested control of antirevolutionary leadership. While the process of divorce of the Congress movement from the dynamic forces of revolution was thus revealed, the predominating tendency in the Bengal provincial as well as four other provincial gatherings was towards the right to join hands with the moderates. The opposition of left extremism was futile, because it was in no way connected with the forces of mass energy. There were small minorities which declared the necessity of going to the masses, but their voice was overwhelmed in the turmoil preparing the ground for a united front of the bourgeoisie, native and foreign.

In spite of this widening gulf between the political movement and the economic struggle of the working class, the latter has not yet completely fallen under antirevolutionary leadership, because the objective forces of revolution are still in operation. Most of the trade unions federated in the Trade Union Congress are boards to officers rather than working class organisations. These officers are invariably

outsiders making capital of the labour movement, or government agents. They try to dictate how the workers should behave and organise, but are not yet able to curb the spontaneous, although largely, unconscious revolt of the toiling masses. In many unions, a spirit of revolt against the "upper class" leaders is growing.

In short the bourgeoisie has proved itself incapable, even unwilling, to push the Indian movement ahead towards the revolution. The petty bourgeois extremism, which expects to gain very little by compromise with the imperialist exploiter, would like to go farther, but is unable to find and employ with resoluteness the suitable tactical weapon. The Congress, which has built up the skeleton of a nationwide organisation, is thus left without a revolutionary leadership on the one hand, and is losing the support of the masses on the other. The element that can save the situation is yet very weak, but is not lacking. The development of this factor will prevent the split that is threatening the movement; it will keep the political movement for national liberation based on the revolutionary uprising of the masses, and will be able to push the unwilling bourgeoisie into the anti-imperialist struggle, thus utilising the little revolutionary significance it possesses.

(Inprecor, Vol II, No 60, 21 July 1922.)

First Communist Journal in India

The *Socialist* which is the first communist journal to be published in India was started by S. A. Dange in the beginning of August 1922. It was a 8-page crown size English weekly which continued to appear regularly till the end of December 1922 after which it became a monthly (demi-octavo size). It continued to appear as a monthly up to his arrest in the Kanpur "Bolshevik Conspiracy Case" in February 1924. Thereafter a few issues of the paper appeared in 1924 in the weekly form edited by K. N. Joglekar, then it stopped. A complete file of the *Socialist* has not yet been found.

Describing the formation of the earliest communist groups in India and the starting of the *Socialist*, Dange writes as follows in his recent book:

"The Tashkent party (i.e. CPI) and the ECCI tried to build contacts independently and through me with the communist group in Calcutta led by Muzaffar Ahmad and the group in Madras led by Singaravelu Chettiar. They tried to send back to India some of the Indian comrades, who had been under training in the University for the Toilers of the East, to work along with us.

"But most of them failed to reach safely via the land route of the north-west frontier. They were caught by the British police and sentenced to imprisonment in what is known as the Peshawar Conspiracy Case of 1923. On release, they later joined us under the leadership of Comrade (Ferozuddin) Mansoor.

"Soon the leadership of the Indian groups, which were preparing to hold a conference and form a party and functioning centre on Indian soil, was arrested and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment in

what is known as the Bolshevik Conspiracy Case in May 1924. The three who were thus sentenced along with me were Muzaffar Ahmad, Shaikat Usmani and Nalini Gupta. Singaravelu Chettiar of Madras though arrested was not put on trial due to being confined to hospital for serious illness. Thus ended the first attempt at forming a centralised functioning party on Indian soil itself, instead of an emigre organisation.

"At this stage, whatever problems of political line or ideology confronted the Indian communists, they had hardly any organ or organisation in which they could discuss them. The *Socialist*, which was the only paper we published in India and was edited by me from 1922 to 1924, was not in a position to handle such questions for various reasons. It depended on literature sent by the representative of the ECCI (i.e. M. N. Roy—G A) or the *Inprecor* for its 'line' and the material for it. But that did not help much as most of the material that was sent fell into the hands of British intelligence. We, however, found means to publish the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848 and *Wage, Labour and Capital* and some ten other books and pamphlets in Bombay in 1922-23" (When Communists Differ, S. A. Dange, Bombay, 1970, pp. 38-39).

We are able to reproduce only a few articles from the early issues of the *Socialist* when it was a weekly in the second half of 1922. These we have obtained from Dange himself. Cecil Kaye's *Communism in India* gives some important quotations from some of the early issues of the *Socialist* and some other information which fully confirms what Dange writes in the long extract we have quoted above.

The first two issues of the *Socialist* reached M. N. Roy in Moscow some time in the third week of September. We are reproducing Roy's letter to Dange dated 26 September 1922. This was found in the Kanpur Bolshevik Case records. It was written on the letterhead of *The Vanguard of Indian Independence* and with it was enclosed an advertisement of *India in Transition*.

This is described as "the earliest document" in the judgment of the case. The reference to materials and messages sent "through different channels" is to the visit of Ashleigh who met Dange secretly in September 1922. Ashleigh came with a message to Muzaffar Ahmad and Dange that a delegation of Indian communists should proceed to Moscow to attend the Fourth Congress of the CI which was to meet in November that year. Actually no one was able to go from India.

In his letter Roy writes: "India needs the *Socialist* very much. It will infuse some life and vigour in Indian journalism which has got into an intellectual rut." Later in *The Advance Guard*, dated 1 October 1922, Roy gives a brief review of the *Socialist*. The *Advance Guard* it will be remembered was the changed name of the *Vanguard* under which it appeared from 1 October 1922 to February 1923, after which it again reappeared under its old name. The change of name was resorted to "after the first nine numbers of the *Vanguard* had appeared, in the hope of defeating the prohibition against the entry of the *Vanguard* into India" (Cecil Kaye, *Communism in India*, p. 25). The review of the

Socialist appearing in the first issue of *The Advance Guard* of 1 October 1922 runs as follows:

"The **Socialist** (Bombay) is the pioneer of the political party which will lead the struggle for national liberation in order to secure real freedom for the masses of the Indian people. Judging from the several numbers that have already reached us the new contemporary has started very well in its career, which has great and glorious future before it. The appearance of the **Socialist** marks the beginning of a new era in our movement. It is the harbinger of the coming revolutionary leadership which is alone capable of guiding our movement to the ultimate goal. The upper class has joined hands with the foreign ruler, the middle classes have more than once betrayed their inability to go very far; and the future belongs to the expropriated masses 'who have nothing to lose but a world to gain'. With this motto the **Socialist** has begun the new phase of our movement. We wish our contemporary all success" (quoted from *Communism in India* by C. Kaye, 1926, p 25).

Cecil Kaye states that Roy sent to Dange some theses "On the Oriental Question" which was printed in the **Socialist** dated 2 September, i.e. probably Vol. 1, No. 5. A mention of these theses also occurs in Roy's letter to Dange dated 26 September 1922, which we reproduce in the following. Roy says: "You are at liberty to use the theses in any way that suits the circumstances you have to work in." It seems Roy sent these theses some time in the beginning of August, i.e. even before he received the first two issues of the **Socialist**. That is why Roy is mentioning the same again in his next letter which he writes after he received the first two issues. We have not got the full text of these theses of Roy. This cannot be the "report on India" which Roy prepared prior to his *India in Transition*, and which was probably printed in March or April issue of the magazine *Communist International*.^{*} The theses are general and refer to "the eastern question" as a whole. Can they be Roy's first draft of the "Theses on the Eastern Question" which he was to present to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in November 1922? This also does not appear to be likely, especially because Roy in his speech to this congress says that these latter theses were prepared by "all the eastern delegations at this congress in cooperation with the Eastern Section of the Communist International".

Cecil Kaye gives an extract from these theses in the form in which they were printed in the **Socialist** dated 2 September. The extract runs thus:

"The condition obtaining in the various countries should be carefully studied in order to ascertain which social class is historically and circumstantially destined to be revolutionary in the present moment as

* See reference to the same in the introduction to extracts from *India in Transition*.

well as in the immediate future, since in such a class conscious section is to be found the natural ally of the western proletariat in its fight for the overthrow of the capitalist order of society...

"The first stages of the change all over the East are bound to be a great upheaval against foreign imperialism, but it will be headed by the most active social class according to the economic development of the respective countries. But until and unless the masses of the subject population take active and conscious part in the mass movement, the foreign imperialism cannot and will not be overthrown only by the action of the bourgeoisie" (*Communism in India*, pp. 33-34).

Kaye states further that two weeks later, in the *Socialist* dated 16 September, Dange "announced the formation of the Indian Socialist Labour Party of the Indian National Congress... as a corollary it may be presumed to Roy's views on the oriental question printed in the *Socialist* on September 2" The quotation runs as follows:

"To rouse the nation to its depths in the light of the great international movement that is coming to the forefront and which will before long be the party in power in advanced countries, we suggest to the Indian National Congress to have connection with this worldwide movement of true freedom of the masses.* We suggest to the radical minded men of the Congress... a programme of a party suited to our present conditions. The party may be called the Indian Socialist Labour Party of the Indian National Congress... The ISLP must believe in democracy organised both in political and industrial aspects (?)... The party must take its part in the struggle of the people to win freedom from the economic tyranny imposed by the capitalist class and the capitalist state. The best way of effecting a change to socialism is by the organisation of the workers, politically to capture the power of the state and industrially to take over the control and management of the industrial machine. The party must recognise that circumstances may arise when a government or reactionary class might attempt to suppress liberty or thwart the national will, and that to defeat such an attempt democracy must use to the utmost extent its political and industrial power. We think such a programme will not frighten even the most chicken-hearted spiritualists" (*ibid*, p. 34).

In another article in the *Socialist* dated 23 September 1922, T. V. Parvate makes clear what Dange meant by democracy using its power to the utmost extent. In an article headed "Socialist Party of the Congress", Parvate writes:

"Irish labourers had done the same, when they made an alliance with the Sinn Feiners. The several parties made common cause and

* This cryptic reference is not to the international socialist and labour movement but to the international communist and workers' movement represented by the CI, the communist parties and the RILU and is not made explicit, for obvious reasons — G.A.

fought for Irish freedom. So let us do in India, remembering however that the success in the fight with the foreigner does not end our struggle. We have to struggle with the privileged propertied and the landed interests and the rich" (Ibid., p 34)

Here we see that the perspective of the Indian Socialist Labour Party of the Indian National Congress is fairly clearly spelt out. In the fight against foreign imperialism the working class organising the toiling masses unites with the national movement but after success in this fight the struggle with the privileged and the big landlord bourgeois interests will have to be taken up. Roy puts the ideas much more clearly and lucidly the next week in his *The Advance Guard* dated 1 October 1922. He writes:

"The leadership of the national struggle must be taken over by a mass party consciously representing the interests, immediate as well as ultimate, of the workers and peasants.. By mobilising the revolutionary energy of the toiling masses in battle array, this party will strengthen the position of the middle class democrats and push them onward in their struggle against the foreign rule. Therefore what is needed at the present crisis is a political party of the masses based on the principle of class interest and with a programme advocating mass action for carrying forward the struggle for national liberation..."

"Let the revolutionary elements within the Congress not be carried away by any prospects of unity with the 'moderates' because that unity will spell reaction to the movement. The revolutionary nationalists should beware of this eventuality and capture the Congress leadership at the head of a united working class party"

On 3 October 1922, Roy acknowledged a letter from Dange which appears to have contained Dange's proposal for starting a Socialist Labour Party of India. Roy wrote that this better be postponed until after the Fourth Congress of the Comintern to which he invited Dange to attend in person or send a representative and promised suitable arrangement and support for the Socialist as well as literature and literary contributions (Kaye, *ibid.*, pp 34-35).

Later, on 2 November 1922, Roy wrote to Dange again commenting on Dange's suggestion of starting a Socialist Labour Party of India. Here he explained the relation between the CPI and an open "mass party of revolutionary nationalist struggle" and said:

"As was to be expected, each of the Indian 'centres' produced a separate scheme and it was some time before they could agree to combine."

Here Roy is probably referring to a similar proposal made by Singaravelu from Madras. This materialised later in the beginning of 1923 when Singaravelu started his Labour Kishan Party of Hindusthan and published its manifesto in May 1923 which we will reproduce among the documents of that year. About the same time we find Dange in his Socialist listing his own activities as part of the Labour Kishan Party of Hindustan and calling for its branches being established everywhere.

About the same time, i.e. in the closing months of 1922, Abanl Mukherji was touring India illegally on his own and contacting the various communist groups. He seems to have met Dange in Bombay and Singaravelu in Madras. He met Manilal and was present underground in the Gaya congress as well. Together with Manilal he seems to have put forward a labour swaraj manifesto and proposed the formation of a labour swaraj party to work inside the Congress. But no labour swaraj party came into existence in 1922. Actually Labour Swaraj Party came into existence at the end of 1925 in which Muzaffar Ahmad played an important role.

All these facts are mentioned here to show that these early suggestions and efforts in 1922 were the precursors of the later successful efforts to build the Workers' and Peasants' Party of India which functioning inside the Congress became a revolutionary focus for the formation of a leftwing in the same and functioning independently became an instrument for building a broad mass base for the illegally functioning CPI and for its strengthening.

These developments will be recorded in their proper place through the appropriate relevant documents. Here it is only necessary to state that Dange and Roy were the first to arrive at this proposal, it seems, independently of each other.

5. S. A. Dange's "The Socialist"

(a) M. N. ROY'S LETTER TO S. A. DANGE

Dated Berlin September 26, 1922

My dear Comrade Dange,

First of all I must congratulate you upon *The Socialist* which will have a place of honour in the history of India. Only two numbers have reached us. We have read them with great pleasure. India needs *The Socialist* very much. It will infuse some vigour and life in Indian journalism which has got into an intellectual rut. You are at liberty to use the theses in any way that suits the circumstances you have to work in. I hope that you have already received other materials from me through different channels and trust that messages will be responded to satisfactorily. It is very necessary to do so.

I will write more after hearing from you, of course I would like the most to have the chance of meeting for the purposes of discussing many things.

Please send me four copies of *The Socialist*. I will send subscription by the next mail. Enclosed herewith is also an advertisement of my book which I hope has reached you

already. Please insert the advertisement for several issues and the money will be sent to you by the next mail.

With heartiest greetings.

M. N. ROY

(Kanpur Conspiracy Case, Exhibit No. 29)

* * *

(b) FALL IN UNION MEMBERSHIP—A COMMENT

The *Labour Gazettee* publishes a quarterly review of trade union activities in the Bombay Presidency. The third quarter of 1922 shows a decrease in the membership of the Bombay unions. The decrease is mainly found in the number of members of the BB & CI and GIP Railwaymen's Unions in Bombay. The secretary of these unions states that it has been necessary to remove the names of a number of members from the rolls, as in spite of numerous reminders, subscriptions were not forthcoming.

For the cause of this we must dive even deeper. The union men cease to take interest and pay subscriptions because the union ceases to interest them. Union leaders forget that a union is a fighting weapon and not a banking institution to build up "fixed deposits" and "reserves". Union leaders seem to be more actuated by a desire to please union men with the bank-reserves at their credit and naturally the worker comes to the conclusion with his instinctive logic that his own pocket or stomach-bank is as good as any other chosen by the secretary for the sums of his subscription money.

(*Socialist*, 21 October 1922.)

* * *

(c) "FRAME THE DEMAND"—BY S. A. DANGE

The Akali arrests have gone up over 2,500 and the Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee deserves unstinted praise for its highly efficient organisation and conduct of the campaign. The reason for this is ascribed to many things and as usual the noncooperator philosopher is ready with his deduction that his nonviolent satyagraha has proved its superiority because the Akalis have re- non-

violent and some philosophers have gone to the length of saying that it has proved successful, though the end is not in sight as yet.

However, if we excuse this hastiness of an impatient philosophy to instal herself in a position of acceptance and look to the striking point in the Akalis, we shall find that the efficiency of the whole movement is due to the military discipline of the community. It is not the philosophic faith in the creed of nonviolence that makes the Akali sacrifice himself so nobly. A few days back he marched with as much heroism and joy to cut the heads of his enemies on the war front. Violence or nonviolence to him is the same. To him matters only word of superior command, as far as methods of fighting are concerned, for he has been bred to it. For himself he determines to fight and leaves the tactics, methods and means to the best judge.

The Akali shows to us that whether with violence or nonviolence, military discipline and military-like organisation alone can avail anything. Frantic gestures of constructivism, and accounting, budgeting and commercial trading on funds raised for political fight can little influence the imperialist armageddon of the British.

But what is going to be the solution of the Akali tangle? In the hurry and confusion of the fight it is likely that the real issues, on which the struggle began, may be lost sight of and a false issue may occupy the ground leaving the source of the evil as it is. Anyone can see that the press of the country while speaking of the Akalis now is concerned mainly with the question whether government was cruel or not in the handling of the jathas, and the Congress Inquiry Committee too is engrossed in proving from thousands of witnesses that government was hard-hearted, and everything else that militarism can be accused of. Well, if this evidence is being collected only to "train" popular opinion, we think popular opinion has arrived at the committee's judgment without its evidence, and public opinion here or anywhere in the world cares little for documentary evidence and judicial analysis in forming its theories.

What we mean to drive at is that the aim of the Akalis

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A Magazine of International Socialists

Editor: S. A. DANCE

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should be formulated and immediate demands outlined. The whole community should be made conscious of the aim of its fighting, which is not simple cutting of trees at Guru-ka-baug or removal of a few mahants. The evil of it is still deeper.

The Akalis are tillers of the soil, which is administered by the mahants in the interests of wheat speculators and exporters. During war time a great many Akalis were drawn off from the land. Demand for wheat in the foreign market raised the price of wheat and the Akali peasant was for a time prosperous. The high prices were so tempting that the Akali sold almost every grain, with the result that a shortage and wheat famine followed and Punjab was obliged to import wheat for consumption.

The prosperity of the war time soon faded away: The peasant became pauper as before and the return of dis-banded men burdened the soil with more mouths and thus enhanced the evil; but the high rate of expropriation with which they were saddled by the mahants was not reduced. The Akalis looked for the source and found it in the mahant, who is merely the tool in the hands of higher expropriating organisations.

Simple removal of the mahant will not benefit the Akalis. It cannot free them from the high land tax, and the scourge of wheat cornering and speculation carried on by high finance like that of the Rallis. Only the freedom of the land from the high tax, common holding and equitable distribution will end the Akalis' expropriation.

(Socialist, 21 October 1922.)

(d) HOW "THE SOCIALIST" WAS BORN

S. A. Dange in his article on "S. V. Ghatge—Our First Secretary" gives the following facts about the *Socialist*: "After the collapse of the noncooperation movement, our group floated the weekly *The Socialist* whose first number appeared on 5 August 1922.

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"After the collapse of the noncooperation movement, our group floated the weekly *The Socialist* whose first number appeared on 5 August 1922.

"The appearance of the paper with its open and frank adherence to the philosophy of Marxism sent the Anglo-

Indian press in a hysteria of rage and abuse. *The Times of India* wrote a note denouncing the paper as a 'Bolshevik rag.'

The appearance of *Socialist* attracted the attention of S. S. Mirajkar who came and joined Dange and helped him in the despatch of the paper. Referring to this, Dange says: "We reaped a good dividend on the very first issue."

He then goes on to describe how Ghate when he noticed the first issue sent for Dange and "met him in the Shri Krishna Lodge—a hotel-cum-dining place where Ghate was working as a manager." "...that was the beginning of a friendship and comradeship that lasted a whole life time, despite all ups and downs."

Later, says Dange, he was joined by V. H. Joshi, Lalji Pendse, Katdare, Patwardhan and Juwekar. "Then a post-card came from the Calcutta group that they were glad that a paper like that had come out. It was written by Muzaffar Ahmad in his beautiful handwriting. The Madras group, known by Singaravelu Chettiar's activities, wanted a meeting and 'link-up' with us, the 'Socialist group'.

"All these forces were now thinking of founding a new party of the working class. Mahatma Gandhi's condemnation of the workers' uprising at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales and his addressing all of us, who had participated in that movement, as 'hooligans' of Bombay (20 November 1921) and later his withdrawal of Bardoli satyagraha had decided for us our line. We wanted a new party. But with what programme, aim and action?...

"We, in Bombay, had once begun work as 'Congress Radicals' within the Congress fold. We had published a pamphlet with that name. It was a speech of mine in a public meeting. The publisher was R. V. Nadkarni. Then we had launched the 'Socialist Labour Party of India' which received some attention or recognition from the Communist International. It can be seen from M. N. Roy's letter to me dated 22 November 1922, which never reached me but came up as government exhibit in the Cawnpore Conspiracy Case. Madras and Punjab had launched a Labour and Kisan Party of Hindoostan. At the Gaya congress we distributed

a sort of a manifesto in the name of the Communist Party of India, parts of which were printed in *The Socialist*.* It had come from abroad. But we were not very clear about ourselves. We expected the Communist International to do something to guide us."

* K. N. Joglekar says in his unpublished reminiscences: "We got published M. N. Roy's manifesto to the Gaya congress in the *Rashtra Sevak*, a Marathi daily started by Jannadas Mehta. We also got it separately printed in English and sent it to Comrade Dange at Gaya to distribute the same to the delegates and visitors attending the congress there."

India and Colonial Question at the Fourth Comintern Congress

The idea that the young communist parties and groups fighting in the ranks of the national independence movements in the countries oppressed by foreign imperialism should come forward as active builders of broad united anti-imperialist front was first clearly formulated in the "Theses on the Eastern Question" adopted at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

M. N. Roy made a report on these theses at the congress, which he said were prepared by "all the eastern delegations at the congress in cooperation with the Eastern Section of the Communist International". We are reproducing here Roy's report as well as the full text of the theses.

We are also giving here for reference and comparison, a section entitled "For an Anti-Imperialist United Front" from the official history of the Comintern (issued by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CC of CPSU, Moscow, 1989) which gives an authoritative summing up of the colonial question at the Fourth Congress.

The keynote of the policy and tactic evolved at the congress was for a united proletarian front and the theses on the eastern question were a specific application of this general line and tactic to the problem of the national liberation struggle of the people of the oppressed and dependent countries. The congress was preceded by several meetings of the ECCI which initiated actions of the communists in Europe to bring together the various international working class organizations, especially groups under the reformist leadership, into a broad proletarian united front to defend the immediate interests of the workers.

We have already referred to the call of ECCI on 30 July 1921 which led to a broadbased committee supported by international working class organisations and progressive intellectuals from all over the world to render assistance and relief to the famine-stricken people in parts of Soviet Russia. It was the first worldwide campaign of international working class solidarity with the socialist Soviet Union, which followed the earlier "Hands off Russia" campaign in England and France in the days of British-instigated war of intervention against Soviet Russia.

On 18 December 1921 the ECCI adopted "theses on the united front of the working class, and on the relations with the workers who supported the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals, and with those who are organised under the Amsterdam Trade Union International as well as with those who support the anarcho-sindicalist unions". This was a concrete implementation of the slogan issued by the Third Congress, viz "To the Masses"—the idea being to take the initiative to unite the workers without regard to their political and TU affiliation in the common struggle against the new postwar capitalist offensive against the working class. In the early months of 1922 the ECCI took further initiative to call a conference of the representatives of these internationals, viz the Second, Two-and-a-Half and Third, in order to consider the united actions of the working class of Europe and America against the postwar offensive of the capitalists of retrenchment and wage cuts, against the growing danger of a new war.

This led to the setting up of the famous "Commission of Nine", consisting of three representatives from each of the three internationals. In this commission the representatives of the ECCI put forward the proposal to take joint action at the Genoa conference, to raise before the representatives of the imperialist states the voice of the international working class demanding complete disarmament, recognition of the rights and demands of the workers and self-determination of the nations, thus strengthening the hands of the delegation of the Soviet Union which was for the first time present at an international conference with these demands. The ECCI representatives also prepared an International workers' conference for the popularisation of the same demands.

The meeting the "Commission of Nine" evoked great enthusiasm among the European working class and there were united front demonstrations of workers in some European capitals. This alarmed the reformist leaders of the Second International and they conspired with the leaders of the Two-and-a-Half International and the Amsterdam International to hold a separate international workers' conference with the exclusion of communists.

Despite this setback the ECCI in its second extended plenum (7-11 June 1922) called for carrying forward the tactics of united front and criticised the sectarian tendencies in some West European communist parties which underestimated its importance. The task of deve-

loping a broad united front of the working class to defend democracy and the rights of the working class had become all the more urgent as Mussolini's fascist bands in Italy were marching in to seize state power with the support of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. The young Communist Party of Italy fought actively against fascism but was unable to prevent Mussolini and his fascist regime from coming to power in October 1922.

The Fourth Congress met against this background. It was a background of the declining tempo of the revolutionary upsurge of the working class in Europe and of the rise of fascism in Italy on the one hand and the still continuing tempo of the national liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations of Asia and Africa against imperialism on the other. The congress met from 5 November 1922 to 5 December 1922. There were 408 delegates from 68 parties and organisations from 58 countries and the membership of the communist parties represented at the congress was 12,53,000. Out of this the membership of the communist parties of the capitalist countries was 8,25,000.

Among the questions on the agenda were the report of the ECCI, Lenin's report on "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution"; the capitalist offensive and the offensive of fascism; the programme of the CI; the eastern question and the agrarian question.

The central tactical slogans that emerged from the deliberations of the congress and which gave the general guidelines to the rising communist and militant working class movements in Europe and to the growing national independence movement in the dependent countries of Asia and Africa were—firstly, the united working class front against capitalist offensive and against the rise of fascism, and the slogan of a workers' government for the countries of Europe and America, and secondly the anti-imperialist united front and the fight for national independence for the freedom movement of the peoples of the oppressed countries of Asia and Africa.

The two aspects of the main decisions of the congress are inseparably linked together. The documents we have reproduced concern the second aspect.

The decision to convene the congress was probably taken in the second extended plenum of the ECCI which met in the beginning of June. In the *Inprecor* dated 17 July 1922 a brief item appeared inviting the Indian Communist Party to send delegates to the Fourth Congress. In the fortnightly, *The Vanguard of Indian Independence*, edited by M. N. Roy, in the issue of 1 September 1922, there was article on "The World Congress", which also invited India to send delegates.

Roy knew that an announcement in the *Inprecor* or even article in the *Vanguard* could not enable Indian delegates to come to the congress. So in September 1922 he sent Charles Ashleigh secretly to India to meet Dange and also to contact Muzaffar Ahmad. Earlier Roy

wrote a letter to Muzaffar Ahmad announcing Ashleigh's arrival. In this he also wrote that he wanted Chiraranjan Das and Subhas Chandra Bose to come to the Fourth Congress and asked Muzaffar Ahmad to transmit these letters.

Roy sent Ashleigh to Dange in order to invite him to the Fourth Congress or to send a representative. This is recorded in two letters from Roy to Dange: one dated 26 September 1922 and other dated 3 October 1922. In the first letter Roy writes: "I hope you have already received other materials from me through different channels and trust that the messages will be responded to satisfactorily." "Through different channels" is obviously a reference to Ashleigh's visit. What response Roy expected from Dange becomes clear from the next letter. In that letter (dated 3 October 1922)- Roy acknowledged a letter from Dange which appears to have contained Dange's proposal for starting a socialist labour party of India. This proposal was also contained in the early issues of the *Socialist* started on 7 August 1922, which had also gone to Roy. Roy wrote that this had better be postponed until after the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, which he invited Dange to attend in person or to send a representative, and promised "suitable arrangement and support for the *Socialist* as well as literature and literary contribution" (*Communism in India*, Cecil Kaye, 1926, pp. 33-34).

Charles Ashleigh was a British communist who was in USA in 1918, where he was active in a trade union strike, working for its publicity. He was arrested and placed on to trial with 100 others. Some of them were also communists. In this trial Ashleigh was sentenced to 10 years but was later released by the President on representation by prominent men. Ashleigh was released in February 1922 and was deported immediately. He remained in England till July 1922 and later visited Berlin (from a statement made by Ashleigh to the police in Bombay after his "arrest" for enquiry on his arrival on 19 September 1922, NAI-HPD, File No. 22 of 1923, Part IV, series 1-8).

The same file gives the following additional information. It appears that the London police got hold of these antecedents of Ashleigh after he had boarded the ship for Bombay on a valid passport. A secret communication was immediately sent to the Government of India saying that Ashleigh's empire-wide passport and endorsement is cancelled and his passport as he lands in India is invalid. Consequently he was detained on board, his luggage was searched and also his person. Nothing incriminating was found. His statement was recorded by the Bombay police from which we have quoted above. In this he is reported to have also agreed to keep away from political and strike meetings and to go back by the next Saturday mail boat. He was allowed to land and to lodge in a hotel and was kept under surveillance. He was informed that his passport was invalid and that he must leave by the mail boat on 23 September (1922) which he actually did.

However, Charles Ashleigh managed in the 4-5 days he was in Bombay to evade the police surveillance and to meet Dange and deli-

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India and Colonial Question at the Fourth CI Congress

Wrote a letter to Muzaffar Ahmad announcing Ashleigh's arrival. He also wrote that he wanted Chiraranjan Das and asked Muzaffar to come to the Fourth Congress and asked Muzaffar to forward these letters.

Roy sent Ashleigh to Dange in order to invite him to the Congress or to send a representative. This is recorded from Roy to Dange: one dated 26 September 1922 and another dated 3 October 1922. In the first letter Roy writes: "I hope you will be able to get other materials from me through different channels. The messages will be responded to satisfactorily through these channels" is obviously a reference to Ashleigh. The response Roy expected from Dange becomes clear from a later letter (dated 3 October 1922) - Roy acknowledged Dange's reply which appears to have contained Dange's proposal for a socialist labour party of India. This proposal was one of the early issues of the Socialist started on 7 August 1922. Roy wrote that this had better be discussed at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, which he intended to attend in person or to send a representative, and promised "financial support for the Socialist as well as every contribution" (Communism in India, Cecil Kaye).

Charles Ashleigh was a British communist who was active in a trade union strike, working in India. He was arrested and placed on to trial with 100 others.

In this trial Ashleigh was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. He was released by the President on representation. He was released in February 1922 and was released in England till July 1922 and in a statement made by Ashleigh to the police in London for enquiry on his arrival on 19 September 1922 (Part IV, series 1-8).

He gives the following additional information: London police got hold of these antecedents, boarded the ship for Bombay on a valid passport, was immediately sent to the Government, empire-wide passport, and endorsement, as he lands in India is invalid. Consequently, his luggage was searched and his statement was found. His statement was which we have quoted above. In London, he also agreed to keep away from political activity by the next Saturday mail boat. He was in a hotel and was kept under surveillance. His passport was invalid and that he was actually in India.

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loping a broad united front of the working class to defend democracy and the rights of the working class had become all the more urgent as Mussolini's fascist bands in Italy were marching in to seize state power with the support of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. The young Communist Party of Italy fought actively against fascism but was unable to prevent Mussolini and his fascist regime from coming to power in October 1922

The Fourth Congress met against this background. It was a background of the declining tempo of the revolutionary upsurge of the working class in Europe and of the rise of fascism in Italy on the one hand and the still continuing tempo of the national liberation struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations of Asia and Africa against imperialism on the other. The congress met from 5 November 1922 to 5 December 1922. There were 408 delegates from 66 parties and organisations from 58 countries and the membership of the communist parties represented at the congress was 12,53,000. Out of this the membership of the communist parties of the capitalist countries was 8,25,000

Among the questions on the agenda were the report of the ECCI, Lenin's report on "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution"; the capitalist offensive and the offensive of fascism; the programme of the CI; the eastern question and the agrarian question.

The central tactical slogans that emerged from the deliberations of the congress and which gave the general guidelines to the rising communist and militant working class movements in Europe and to the growing national independence movement in the dependant countries of Asia and Africa were—firstly, the united working class front against capitalist offensive and against the rise of fascism, and the slogan of a workers' government for the countries of Europe and America, and secondly the anti-imperialist united front and the fight for national independence for the freedom movement of the peoples of the oppressed countries of Asia and Africa.

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The Government of India and the Secretary of State for India in London came to know later these doings of Ashleigh and they instituted an inquiry and review of the case of Charles Ashleigh of which the confidential home department file we quoted above is a record. The conclusion of this investigation was that the measures taken by the Bombay police were not adequate. They ought to have cancelled Ashleigh's passport on the spot and arrested him so as to prevent him from holding interviews with "undesirable persons" and deliver letters he had brought.

In the Kanpur Conspiracy Case (May 1924) Dange had stated to the court that he had met Ashleigh. To his coaccused in the case and particularly to Muzaffar he had told everything about Ashleigh (MCPI, p. 320). Later in 1964 in his article in *New Age* weekly, Dange has given details of his meeting with Ashleigh - how Ashleigh managed to slip out of the back door of the hotel and to go to the Bombay Chronicle office and how its subeditor R. K. Prabhu and the English editor were helpful in getting Dange brought to the office where he met Ashleigh.

The main purpose of Ashleigh's visit was to make contacts with the various communist groups that had already begun functioning in India by 1922 and to arrange to get a representative delegation to come to the Fourth Congress which was to meet in November. This comes out very clearly from the Roy-Dange correspondence, after Ashleigh's visit, which was produced in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case. In this there is no mention of any money sent by Roy through Ashleigh for the passage of the proposed delegation, nor have the prosecution in the Kanpur case mentioned any such fact, which would have naturally strengthened their charge against Dange and the other accused.

Muzaffar Ahmad too had never mentioned any such thing in his earlier writings on party history while referring to the Ashleigh case. But now in his latest book he says: "Ashleigh then handed over to Dange the letters, documents and the passage money for the delegates to the Fourth Congress. I do not know what the exact amount was, but according to Masood Ali Shah, the British spy, it was £800, possibly in eight one-hundred-pound notes." Muzaffar Ahmad adds "Dange 'pocketed the money'" (MCPI, p. 319).

Leaving aside the statement of Masood Ali Shah whom Muzaffar Ahmad himself characterises as the British spy, we turn to the other "documentary proof" which he has produced in support of his slanderous allegation against Dange (an extract from NAI-HPD, File No. 956 of 1922, p. 11). This is a report which a British intelligence agent "HR", stationed in Paris, sent about what he learned from George Stacombe,

a well-known representative of *Daily Herald*, who was known to Charles Ashleigh and is supposed to have met him in Paris after the latter's return from India. The relevant passage in his "report" is: "Ashleigh met a certain Indian with whom the editor was in touch, and handed over to this Indian passage money for delegates, who were invited to join Roy, and the invitation issued by Roy. Siocombe added that the English editor was a communist" (MCPI, pp. 324-25).

Now if the police and the British government in India had this evidence in their hands in 1922, i.e. long before they launched the Kanpur Conspiracy Case against Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad and the others, why did they not bring it forward to strengthen their case? Ashleigh-Dange meeting figured in the case as a proved fact and the receipt of passage money by one of the accused for sending delegates to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern—the fountainhead of the conspiracy—was very relevant indeed. But this "evidence" was not brought forward by the prosecution because it was worthless and could not be proved in a court of law. It is surprising that Muzaffar Ahmad who prides himself on his meticulous approach to facts should have plumped for this untenable evidence.

The situation of the young communist movement in India on the eve of the Fourth Congress has been sketched in our introduction to the extracts and articles from the *Socialist* of Dange. Roy was in touch with the four groups, viz that of Dange round the *Socialist* in Bombay, of Muzaffar Ahmad in Calcutta, of Ghulam Hussain who was issuing *Inqilab* (Urdu) from Lahore and that of Singaravelu in Madras. Roy was also in touch with Nalini Gupta and Shaukat Usmani who had returned to India at the end of 1921 or the beginning of 1922. The idea of forming a party of socialism was put forward by Dange and later by Singaravelu. Roy was already putting forward the same idea through his letters and articles. The task of welding the various communist groups into an all-India party, of formulating its immediate programme of fighting for the complete independence of the country and for the urgent political and economic demands of the masses and of defining the relation of the communist party and the broad leftwing party—had yet to be carried out. The problem of combining legal and illegal work to defeat imperialist repression had to be solved.

All these points came out in Roy's correspondence with Dange and Muzaffar Ahmad and in his letters and articles in the period after Ashleigh's visit.

Writing soon after the return of Ashleigh and before the opening of the Fourth Congress, Roy in his letter to Dange dated Moscow, 2 November 1922, says "We counted much on the success of his (Ashleigh's) mission. But we believe that he did the best that could be done under the circumstances, that is to transfer his charge to the best person available. We look upon you as the most suitable person for the purpose and trust you have seen that some result is achieved

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it is needless to say that presence of some delegates from India will be very welcome and will lead to future welfare of the movement."

Explaining that he is going to participate in the forthcoming congress, and that one of the principal points on agenda before the same is the eastern question, Roy says that it is here that one can get a true perspective of the revolutionary movement in the eastern subject countries. He deplores the isolation of our movement which is the most powerful of the colonial national movements

Roy is happy at the formation of a Socialist Labour Party, "which he expects would be affiliated to the Communist International, the latter being the only revolutionary international body". Roy then goes on to explain in detail the tactics to be adopted with reference to the revolutionary organisation of the Indian masses including the formation of a legal "peoples' party" to cover illegal activities.

We have not got the text of this letter which was Exhibit No. 5 in the Kanpur Case. We have taken the above summary from the sessions judgment in the case (authorised copy, p. 21). But there are other letters from Roy written after the Fourth Congress, which deal with the same subjects and the full texts of which are available. For instance, there is a letter from Roy to Dange dated Berlin, 19 December 1922, the full text of which we are giving in this section. It covers the same ground as in the letter of November 1922 but more clearly and gives more details of a new plan. It seems Roy wrote another letter to Dange on 11 November 1922, i.e. soon after the Fourth Congress opened, at which some of the printed material issued by Dange was displayed or shown to Lenin. This material must have been copies of the *Socialist*, *Dange's Gandhi vs Lenin* and pamphlets published by Lotwala, viz *Communist Manifesto*, *Coming of Socialism* by Lucien and some other pamphlets. In this letter Roy writes: "The old man is interested in your book." We have not got the full text of this letter but it is quoted in Kaye's *Communism in India*. Soon after the Fourth Congress Roy wrote another letter to Dange on 12 December 1922. This is exhibit No 7 in Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case. In this letter he says, "absence of anybody straight from India was lamented". This obviously refers to the Indian delegation at the congress. We have also not got the full text of this letter, the portion mentioned is quoted in Kaye's book.

Further comment is necessary on the letter dated 19 December 1922 as it unfolds Roy's new plan after he finds that no delegation from India directly came to the congress. Kaye's comment on this letter is that in it Roy "issued instructions consequent on the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the CI—he appointed Dange to be 'the centre' in India". This facile summary is characteristic of the British police mind, to which Comintern is the fountainhead of the conspiracy which issues "instructions" to its "agents" who are supposed to blindly carry them out. On the other hand the letter unfolds the democratic process involved in the formation of the party and its organisational tactics in

view of the political task it has to perform Enumeration of the salient points of the letter will bring this out as well as the new plan Roy is putting forward :

(1) Roy says : "The Communist international thinks that the time has come for the organisation of our party in India We expected to begin work taking the delegation to the Fourth Congress as the basis" This obviously refers to the foundation of the communist party on an all-India basis This will be clear from the following.

(2) "As none of you could come to the Congress", Roy goes on to say, "it was decided that we should have a conference here as early as possible. In this conference should be called representatives from all the groups in agreement with our programme and feeling the need for a new start in the movement" This conference was to be held under the auspices of the CI and was to be attended by the representatives of the CI and of the British and other continental (communist) parties.

(3) Roy outlines the political situation in which the proposed conference is to meet "We have to utilise the break in the situation created by the deadlock in the Congress." This obviously refers to the withdrawal of the struggle by Gandhiji after the Chauri Chaura incident, and the disappointment and frustration this caused in the ranks of the militants in the National Congress In outlining the tactics of organising the party Roy makes three important points :

(a) "The question of the programme and organisation of a revolutionary party of the working class will be discussed" in this conference. This refers to the organisation of the communist party.

(b) "A revolutionary mass party has to be organised as a part of the Congress" This is to be a leftwing party fighting for the complete political and economic independence of the country from imperialism and for the urgent demands and the democratic rights of the toiling masses.

(c) Roy makes two points, viz firstly, "our party must be built on a very firm foundation", i.e on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and its concrete and creative application to Indian conditions; and secondly, "we have to work both in legal and illegal ways".

(d) Roy further states that the revolutionary leftwing mass party in the National Congress "must be under the control and direction of our party which cannot but be illegal".

Here we have in a nutshell the organisation and tactic of the CPI as it developed in practice in later years, with the Workers' and Peasants' Party functioning inside the Congress and the CPI functioning illegally. How far this organisational pattern was successful in carrying out the two tasks set forth in the "Theses on the Eastern Question" adopted at the Fourth Congress, viz the building of a united anti-imperialist front to carry out the national revolution for complete independence and the building of the communist party based on the class organisation of the working class and on the worker-peasant alliance forged

by championing the cause of the anti-landlord, anti-imperialist agrarian revolution so that the working class becomes a major and decisive factor in the united anti-imperialist front—this can only emerge in the course of the subsequent development in the late twenties and the early thirties.

(4) The fourth point in the letter is that Roy enumerates the four communist groups functioning in India at that time (1922) and wants their representatives to come over to Europe (Berlin) for a conference. These are the groups functioning in Bombay, Madras, Lahore and Calcutta. The group in Calcutta is not specifically named, but the reference to "some from these, whose address Nandlal gave you" obviously refers to Muzaffar's group in Calcutta.

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The conference was to take place in February 1923, that was Roy's proposal. Actually it never took place. There is a letter by Dange to Singaravelu dated 3 February 1923 preserved in the National Archives of India. From this it appears that Dange considered it impracticable to hold a conference of Indian communists in Berlin for the purpose. Dange wrote:

"We shall go on as best as we can in propagating communism among the masses. Who are the Indian communists, how many of them who are prepared to go to Berlin when Germany is on the throes of starvation? There is a good deal to be done here before one thinks of a congress. But let him go on if he has resources enough, but it is absolutely impossible to cross our shores at the present...when that is the case why think of the Berlin conference" (NAI-HPD, 1924, File No. 261).

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We have stated above that no Indian delegate came to the Fourth Congress direct from India. According to the information we got from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the CC of CPSU in Moscow, we learn that four delegates were invited from India but only one came. This is confirmed by two references in the *Inprecor*. In Vol. II of this journal in No. 112 (p. 941) we have the report of the credential committee submitted by Eberlein to the Fourth Congress. Therein it is stated:

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The other reference is in *Inprecor* Vol. II, No. 116, dated 22 December 1922. Here we find that M. N. Roy presented the draft theses of the eastern question which were "prepared by all the eastern dele-

gations present at this congress in cooperation with the Eastern Section of the Communist International". It appears that Roy made the principal report on the same which we have reproduced here.

Was Roy then "the one delegate who came"? It appears that Roy attended the congress either as a member of the ECCI or as a member of its Eastern Section. The "one delegate who came" and who was not straight from India was probably either Santokh Singh or Rattan Singh, both of whom, we definitely know went to Moscow at the end of 1922 to attend the Fourth Congress. This fact is mentioned by Cecil Kaye (*Communism in India*, 1926, p. 50) - "The Ghadar in California... sent two representatives, Santokh Singh and Rattan Singh, to attend the Fourth Congress." But apart from this we have the evidence of Dr Bhupendranath Dutta who met them in Berlin at the end of 1922, when they were going to Moscow (ARI, pp. 349-50). It is quite certain that both attended the congress, one of them as a delegate with the right to vote.

This is further confirmed by Nalini Gupta in his statement he made to the police, from 21 to 27 December after his arrest prior to his trial in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case in 1924 (NAI-HPD, 1924, File No. 21/1, "Internment under Regulation III of 1818 of Nalini Gupta"). In the statement he made on 27 December, he describes his arrival in Moscow in October 1922, when he came out from India the second time. Nalini Gupta says -

"... arrived in Moscow on 3rd October via Petrograd... I was detained in Moscow up to middle of December 1922. Roy himself arrived in Moscow shortly before the congress of the Third International which began on the 5th November. The Indians who attended the congress are myself, Ali Shah, M. N. Roy and two delegates who came from India (?) and belonged to the Ghadar Party. The name of one of them was Anup Singh... These two persons held private conferences with Roy, Tivel (Comintern secretary for Middle East) and Safarov the general secretary of the CI for the East... I noticed these two individuals writing long reports on the work done in the Punjab for the information of the Comintern"

Nalini Gupta is wrong when he says that the two delegates of the Ghadar Party came from India. They came from California where the Ghadar Party centre was located and their real names were Rattan Singh and Santokh Singh. Tivel and Safarov were important comrades connected with Eastern Section of the CI in the early twenties. The name of Tivel is mentioned by Roy in his *Memoirs* and Safarov's articles on India were printed in the earliest issues of *Inprecor*.

From all this we can safely conclude that the other Indian delegate apart from Roy was Rattan Singh of the Ghadar Party, while Santokh Singh, Nalini Gupta and Masood Ali Shah probably attended as observers.

In conclusion we record all the references made to the Indian

Communist Party and the communist movement in India in the sessions of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

In the course of discussion on the eastern and colonial question Radek, referring to the awakening of the working class in the East, said :

"The Indian party has already performed excellent spiritual (ideological?) work. All legal possibilities must be utilised in India. Here the path will also be long and difficult. The main watchwords for the orient are . First the winning over of the working masses, then of the peasants and artisans. The communist parties in the East must become real parties of the people" (*Inprecor*, Vol II, No. 109).

In a brief radio report of Roy's speech at the Fourth Congress on "The Eastern and Colonial Question" made on 22 November 1922, which appeared in *Inprecor*, Vol II, No. 109, p. 894, it is stated .

"Roy (India) points out that the Second Congress established the relations of the world proletariat to the struggles for emancipation among the colonial peoples It was a mistake to range the colonial peoples all in one single category, seeing that these are at different stages of their social-economic evolution. The movement thus takes various forms in various colonies In those colonial countries which are farthest developed the native bourgeoisie shows a tendency to enter into compromises with the world bourgeoisie while the feudal-military elements of backward colonial countries are a mere instrument of the world bourgeoisie. The masses of workers and peasants of the East must energetically fight against militarism. It is however only possible for the masses to participate in such a fight under the leadership of a class party Young communist parties already exist in the countries of the East; it is their task to lead a campaign for the anti-military united front, and to win all revolutionary social elements for this "

Zinoviev, reporting on the work of the executive and the tactics of the Comintern, during the year 1921-22, gave an account of the successes of the parties in forging the united front of the working class and the successes of the working class movements He notes that "in India we have successes to record" (*Inprecor*, Vol II, No. 100).

In the same report Zinoviev gave an account of the sittings and the work of the ECCI between the Third and Fourth Congresses. He notes that India was discussed 10 times during this period (among the other eastern countries China was discussed once). He also notes that "with the cooperation of the EC organised political parties and groups have been formed, within the last 15 months, in such countries as Japan, China, India, Turkey, Egypt and Persia, that is in countries possessing only very small circles of followers at the time of the Third Congress. These parties are still weak in numbers, but the kernel is at least formed In 1883 the group for 'Emancipation of Labour' in Russia was also only a small one..." (*Inprecor*, Vol. II, No 99).

In *Inprecor*, Vol. II, No. 113, dated 16 December 1922, we find the reference that the Fourth Congress resolved to send a telegram of greetings to the All-India Trade Union Congress at Lahore (the text of the telegram is reproduced in the documents of 1923).

Towards the end of the congress, Kolarov submitted the report of the commission on the election of the executive of the CI. It is stated therein that "the list prepared by the small commission has been confirmed by the presidium with certain modifications". In this list the orient region is represented by two delegates i.e. Katayama and Safarov. Roy is the substitute (*Inprecor*, Vol II, No. 118).

6. Documents of Fourth Comintern Congress

(a) "FOR AN ANTI-IMPERIALIST UNITED FRONT"—A REVIEW

The Fourth Congress made a thorough analysis of the stage of development of the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries. The war of the Turkish people for their independence had just been victoriously concluded. The growth of the national liberation movement in India, Egypt, Morocco, China and Korea, the rise of the labour movement in the countries of the East, and the emergence of the communist parties had demonstrably confirmed the Leninist policy of the Comintern on the national and colonial question, and the Leninist teaching on the national freedom movement as a part of the international proletarian revolution. The Communist International held that in the colonies and semicolonies, it was the foremost task of communists to create the nucleus of the communist parties to support the anti-imperialist national revolutionary movement in every way, to raise the communist parties to the level of the vanguard of this movement in the framework of the national freedom movement and strengthen the same.

A congress of the revolutionary organisations of the Far

East took place in January-February 1922, in Moscow and Petrograd, in which representatives of China, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, India, Indonesia and of the people of Siberia participated. The congress expressed its adherence to the decisions of the Comintern congresses on the national and colonial question. The congress laid special emphasis on "the necessity of a correct understanding of the relation between the national revolutionary movement on the one hand and the struggle of the working people for their social liberation on the other, taking note at the same time that the toiling masses of the Far East, smarting under the yoke of imperialism, can win their national and social liberation only in alliance with the international proletariat". Sen Katayama, the veteran leader of the Japanese labour movement and the founder of the Communist Party of Japan, reported at the Fourth Congress of the CI that united front was set up at the congress of the revolutionary organisations of the Far East. "The Japanese, Chinese and Korean communists have already gone ahead and set up a united front against Japanese imperialism", he said.

The Fourth Congress further developed and concretised the political line of the Comintern on the national and colonial question and formulated the slogan of the *anti-imperialist united front*. The programme of this united front provided for the setting up of an independent republic, the abolition of all feudal rights and privileges, an agrarian reform, a progressive labour legislation and a democratisation of the political set up; this means it provided for the implementation of an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution. The necessary precondition for the success of such a revolution was an alliance with the international proletariat and with the Soviet Republics. The congress drew prompt attention to the inconsistency of the national bourgeoisie and simultaneously underlined that it (i.e. the CI) supports the national revolutionary movement and stated that the national bourgeoisie was interested in the solution of the main tasks of the anti-imperialist movement and that this must be fully utilised. The congress stated:

"The working class movement in the colonies and semi-colonies must win for itself the position of an independent revolutionary factor in the over-all anti-imperialist front. Only when its independent significance is recognised and the working class movement is in a position to maintain its political independence, the temporary agreements with bourgeois democracy would be permissible and also necessary."

The working class of these countries must unmistakably strive for an alliance with the peasant and semiproletarian masses.

The congress further emphasised that the revolutionary movement in the colonial countries would achieve no success unless it gets the support of the peasant masses. The agrarian programme of the communists of the countries of the East demands the complete elimination of feudalism and all its survivals and aims at the drawing in of the peasant masses in the struggle for national liberation. The theses on the eastern question adopted at the congress state that the communists must see to it that the national revolutionary parties adopt a radical agrarian programme. The Comintern considered that it was one of the important tasks of the communist parties in the backward countries to utilise the progressive tendencies of the national bourgeoisie of these countries for the struggle against imperialism and feudalism. The congress characterised the feudal lords and the feudal bureaucracy as the supports of foreign imperialism in the colonies; at the same time it drew pointed attention to the fact that in countries where the feudal-patriarchal system has not disintegrated to such an extent that the indigenous aristocracy is completely divorced from the popular masses, "the representatives of this upper strata can play a part of active leaders in the struggle against imperialist policies of violence and suppression". These directives gave the communists of the different backward countries of Asia and Africa the answer to the question as to the possible paths of struggle in their respective countries.

The theses on the eastern question state that the Communist International supports every national revolutionary

movement against imperialism "taking full cognisance of the fact that those who represent the national will to state independence may be themselves of the most varied kind because of the variety of historical circumstances". At the same it does not forget that "only a consistent revolutionary policy, designed to draw the broadest masses into active struggle, and a complete break with all adherents of reconciliation with imperialism for the sake of their own class domination can lead the oppressed classes to victory".

The congress underlined that there is a long struggle ahead of the proletariat of the East and the social strata allied to it in order to prepare themselves for the role of political leadership:

"The refusal of the communists in the colonies to take part in the struggle against imperialist tyranny, on the ground of the ostensible 'defence' of their independent class interests is opportunism of the worst kind, which can only discredit the proletarian revolution in the East. Equally injurious is the attempt to remain aloof from the struggle for the most urgent and everyday interests of the working class in the name of 'national unity', of 'civil peace' with the bourgeois democrats."

The congress came to the conclusion:

"The communist parties of the colonial and semicolonial countries of the East, which are still in a more or less embryonic stage, must take part in every movement which gives them access to the masses."

The working class of colonies and semicolonies can assume the role of the revolutionary leadership only through the struggle against imperialism and the economic and political organisation of the working class will enable it to raise the tempo of this struggle.

Thus the theses on the eastern question adopted at the Fourth Congress defined precisely the mutual relations between the class tasks and the national tasks of the proletariat of the oppressed countries. These tasks being mutually exclusive were on the other hand complementary. The tactics of the anti-imperialist united front in the East were closely bound up with the slogan of the congress on the

united proletarian front in the West. They were only different aspects of one and the same tactics, which were designed to enable the proletariat to achieve the realisation of its leading role in the revolutionary process through continuous, persistent and day-to-day struggle in the framework of the united front. The recognition of the leading role of this or that political force can by no means be made the precondition of its "acceptance" in the front. The congress pointed out that the struggle for the anti-imperialist united front would contribute to "the exposure of the vacillations of the individual sections of bourgeois nationalism".

Further development of the national liberation movement has shown that under new conditions, new paths and form of drawing in the popular masses in the revolutionary struggle would be revealed.

The Comintern came out decisively against the nationalist and racist prejudices which stand in the way of forging an alliance between the indigenous population and the European working people living in the colonies. It emphasised that "our work in the colonies cannot rest on sections which are thus permeated with capitalist and nationalist prejudices, but only on the best indigenous elements, in the first place on indigenous proletarian youth". The theses on the eastern question adopted at the Fourth Congress were permeated with the teachings of Lenin on the necessity of forging a close alliance of the three revolutionary forces, viz the proletarian socialist state, the revolutionary proletariat of the capitalist countries and the national liberation movement. *The slogan of the anti-imperialist united front put forward by the Fourth Congress was significant contribution to the struggle of the oppressed peoples for their freedom and independence.*

(CI-SHO, pp. 205-9. Emphasis added.)

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(b) "REPORT ON THE EASTERN QUESTION"—BY ROY (INDIA)

The countries in the East can be divided into three categories. First, those countries which are nearing to most

highly developed capitalism. Countries where not only the import of capital from the metropolis has developed industry, but a native capitalism has grown, leading to the rise of a bourgeoisie with a developed class consciousness, and its counterpart, the proletariat, which is also developing its class consciousness, and is engaged in an economic struggle which is gradually coming into its political stage. Second, those countries in which capitalist development has taken place but is still at the lower level, and in which feudalism is still the backbone of society. Then we have the third grade, where primitive conditions still prevail, where feudal-patriarchalism is the social order. How, then for the countries under the heading of the colonial and semicolonial countries, which can be divided into groups so apart from each other, a general programme or a general line of tactics can be determined in order to help the development of the revolutionary movement in those countries?

The task before us today in this Fourth Congress is to elaborate those fundamental principles that were laid down by the Second Congress of the Communist International. We are faced today with a concrete problem of how best we can develop the movement in those countries; we have the revolutionary movement in each, but since the social structure of those countries is also different, naturally the character of the revolutionary movement in those countries is also different. In so far as the social character is different the programme for those movements must be different and the tactics must also be different.

With this in view all the eastern delegations present at this congress in cooperation with the Eastern Section of the Communist International have prepared theses which have been submitted to the Congress. In these theses the general situation in the East has been laid down and the development in the movement since the Second Congress has been pointed out and the general line which should determine the development of the movement in those countries has also been formulated.

At the time of the Second Congress, that is on the morrow

of the great imperialist war, we found a general upheaval of the colonial people. This upheaval was brought about by the intensified economic exploitation during the war.

This great revolutionary upheaval attracted the attention of the whole world. We had a revolt in Egypt in 1919, and one of the Korean people in the same year. In the countries lying between these two extreme points there was to be noticed a revolutionary upheaval of more or less intensity and extensiveness. But at that time these movements were nothing but big spontaneous upheavals and since those days the various elements and social factors which went to the composition of these movements have clarified in so far as the social-economic basis has gone on developing. Consequently we find today that the elements which were active participants in those movements two years ago are gradually leaving them if they have not already left them. For example, in the countries which are more developed capitalistically, the upper level of the bourgeoisie, that is that part of the bourgeoisie which has already what may be called a stake in the country, which has a large amount of capital invested, and which has built up an industry, is finding that today it is more convenient for its development to have imperialist protection. Because, when the great social upheaval that took place at the end of the war developed into its revolutionary sweep it was not only the foreign imperialists but the native bourgeoisie as well who were terrified by its possibilities. The bourgeoisie in none of those countries is developed enough as yet to have the confidence of being able to take the place of foreign imperialism and to preserve law and order after the overthrow of imperialism. They are now really afraid that in case foreign rule is overthrown as a consequence of the development of this revolutionary upheaval, a period of anarchy, chaos and disturbance, of civil war will follow that will not be conducive to the promotion of their own interests. That is to say the industrial development of the bourgeoisie needs peace and order which was given to most of these countries by foreign imperialists. The threat to this peace and order, the possibility of disturbance and revolutionary upheaval, has made it more convenient

for the native bourgeoisie to compromise with the imperial overlord.

This naturally has weakened the movement in some of the countries but at the same time this temporary compromise does not fundamentally weaken the movement. In order to maintain its hold in those countries imperialism must look for some local help, must have some social basis, must have the support of one or other of the classes of native society. Today it has found it necessary to repudiate the old methods of imperialist exploitation and it has given the native bourgeoisie or a certain part of the native bourgeoisie certain concessions in the political or economic sphere. These concessions have reconciled the native bourgeoisie temporarily, but they have opened a bigger vision before it. They have permitted a test of economic development and brought into existence a capitalist rivalry, because in so far as industry grows in the colonial countries it undermines the basis of the monopoly of imperial capital.

Therefore, the temporary compromise between native and imperial bourgeoisie cannot be everlasting. In this compromise we can find the development of future conflict.

Then, in that second group of countries where usury and trade capital, feudal bureaucracy and feudal militarism are the leading social element and the leaders of the national movement, this compromising imperial policy has been introduced, but it has not given such satisfactory results as in the other countries because the interest of the feudal bureaucracy and the colonial feudal lords are not so easily compatible as is the case between the imperial and the native bourgeoisie. Therefore, we find that in the last year the nationalist struggle in Turkey took the forefront of all the colonial struggles.

But the latest events in Turkey show us the weakness of this as well, because we know that a national struggle cannot develop, consciousness of political nationhood cannot grow in a people, so long as the social economics of that particular people are bound up with the feudal-patriarchal system. Unless the bourgeoisie comes into existence and becomes leader of the society, the national struggle cannot

take place with all its revolutionary possibilities. So in all these countries, in proportion as the bourgeoisie is developing, the national struggle has become intensified. From this point of view, although we know there is danger of the colonial bourgeoisie always compromising with the imperial bourgeoisie, we must always on principle stand for them; the bourgeois national movement in the colonial countries is objectively revolutionary, therefore it should be given support; but we should not overlook the fact that this objective force cannot be accepted as unconditional, and that particular historical reasons should be taken into consideration. The bourgeoisie becomes a revolutionary factor when it raises the standard of revolt against backward, antiquated forms of society—that is, when the struggle is fundamentally against the feudal order, the bourgeoisie leading the people. Then the bourgeoisie is the vanguard of the revolution.

But this cannot be said of the new bourgeoisie in the eastern countries, or most of them. Although the bourgeoisie is leading the struggle there, it is at the same time not leading it against feudalism. It is leading the struggle against capitalism. Therefore it is a struggle of the weak and suppressed and undeveloped bourgeoisie against a stronger and more developed bourgeoisie. Instead of being a class war it is an internecine war, so to say, and as such contains the elements of compromise.

So, the nationalist struggle in the colonies, the revolutionary movement for national development in the colonies, cannot be based purely and simply on a movement inspired by bourgeois ideology and led by the bourgeoisie. And we see now that in every country all these leading factors—the liberal bourgeoisie in the most advanced countries and the feudal military cliques in the second group of these countries—are gradually trying to make some compromise with the imperial overlord and imperial capitalism.

This position brings us face to face with a problem as to whether there is a possibility of another social factor going into this struggle and wresting the leadership from the hands of those who are leading the struggle so far.

We find in these countries, where capitalism is sufficiently

developed, that such a social factor is already coming into existence. We find in these countries the creation of a proletarian class, and where the penetration of capitalism has undermined the peasantry, bringing into existence a vast mass of poor and landless agrarian toilers. This mass is being gradually drawn into the struggle which is no longer purely economic, but which assumes every day a more and more political character. So also in the countries where feudalism and the feudal-military clique are still holding leadership, we find the development and growth of agrarian movement. In every conflict, in every struggle we find that the interests of imperial capital are identical with the native landowning and feudal class, and that therefore when the masses of the people rise, when the national movement assumes revolutionary proportions, it threatens not only the imperial capital and foreign overlordship, but it finds also the native upper class allied with foreign exploiters.

Hence we see in the colonial countries a triangular fight developing, a fight which is directed at the same time against foreign imperialism and the native upper class which directly or indirectly strengthens and gives support to foreign imperialism.

And this is the fundamental issue of the thing that we have to find out—*How the native bourgeoisie and the native upper class, whose interest conflicts with imperialism or whose economic development is obstructed by imperial domination, can be encouraged and helped to undertake a fight?* We have to find out how the objective revolutionary significance of these factors can be utilised. At the same time we must keep it definitely in mind that these factors can operate only so far and no further. We must know that they will go to a certain extent and then they try to stop the revolution. We have already seen this in practical experience in almost all the countries. A review of the movement in all eastern countries in the last few years would have helped us to develop our point, but the time at our disposal will not permit that. However, I believe most of you are fairly well acquainted with the development of the movement in those countries. You know how the movement

in Egypt and India has been brought to a standstill by the timidity, the hesitation of the bourgeoisie, how a great revolutionary movement which involved the wide masses of the peasantry and the working class and which constituted a serious menace to imperialism could not produce any very serious damage to imperialism simply because the leadership of this movement was in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie was divided into two parts—the upper layer, which was developed industrially and owning big industrial and commercial interests interlinked with imperial capital, found it dangerous for their extension, and therefore went over to the imperialists thus constituting itself a positive obstruction to the revolutionary nationalist movement. The other section with its weak social background did not have the determination, the courage, to put itself at the head of this big revolutionary movement to lead it forward, and the movement consequently, betrayed and misled by these elements, has come to its present period of depression.

Then, on the other hand, we have the example of the Turkish struggle. This struggle is contemporary and you know how the imminent victory of the Turkish people had not been carried on to its logical consequences by the feudal-military clique which stands at its head today. The ultimate victory of the Turkish people, the complete political and economic liberation of the Turkish nation, has been and is going to be compromised in order to safeguard the interests of the small feudal-military clique which has found it convenient to sell itself to one group of imperialists as against another group. That clique found it convenient to ally with one group of imperialists against another. This might lead to the aggrandisement of this group and to the enthronement of Mustapha Kemal Pasha in place of the Sultan who was largely in the hands of British imperialism, but it does not solve the Turkish national problem in any way. And we know that while two or three months ago the revolutionary elements all over the world were hailing the victories of Mustapha Kemal Pasha, we now have the news that Kemal in a free Turkey, freed by the efforts of the

revolutionary workers and peasants, is brutally persecuting the latter.

Hence it is proved that although the bourgeoisie and the feudal military clique in one or other of these countries can assume the leadership of the nationalist revolutionary struggle, there comes a time when these people are bound to betray the movement and become a counter-revolutionary force. Unless we are prepared to train politically the other social element which is objectively more revolutionary to step into their places and assume leadership, the ultimate victory of the nationalist struggle becomes problematical for the time being. Although two years ago we did not think of this problem so clearly, this tendency remained there as an objective tendency, and today, as a result of that, we have in almost all eastern countries communist parties, political parties of the masses. We know that these communist parties in most of these countries cannot be called communist parties in the western sense, but their existence proves that social factors are there, demanding political parties, not bourgeois political parties, but political parties which will express and reflect the demands, interests and aspirations of the masses of the people, peasants and workers, as against that kind of nationalism which merely stands for the economic development and the political aggrandisement of the native bourgeoisie.

The existence of these communist parties in these eastern countries and their historic role becomes more significant when we look at the matter from the other point of view that on account of the misfortune that the bourgeoisie came into the field in the colonial and semicolonial countries a little too late (150 years later), they are not going to play the role of liberators, because they will and can go so far and no farther. Therefore the nationalist revolutionary movement in these countries where millions and millions must have national liberation—must free themselves economically and politically from imperialism before they can progress further—is not going to be successful under the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

Therefore we find the necessity of these communist

parties, which at the present moment cannot be called more than nuclei, are destined to play a big role in so far as they will assume the leadership of the national revolutionary struggle when it is deserted and betrayed by the bourgeoisie. They will be able to carry on the struggle for liberation against imperialism. They alone will be in a position to lead the colonial peoples and oppressed nationalities to the conquest of complete political and economic independence.

These parties are historically destined for and socially capable of this task because they are based on the objectively most revolutionary factor, viz the peasants and workers—the factor which has no interest in common with imperialism and whose social position and economic conditions cannot be improved in any way so long as these countries are under capitalist imperialism.

It is under the leadership, therefore, of a political party representing the workers and peasants that the national revolutionary struggle can come to final victory.

Now comrades, this necessity of organising communist parties in these countries brings us to the programme and tactics of these communist parties. I should point out the necessity that while the Communist International is discussing the problem of a programme it should pay serious attention to this, in view of the fact that to develop the programme of the International in the eastern countries is more complicated. It is more complicated because (unfortunately it is to be confessed) our comrades of the Communist International so far have devoted very little time to the study of these questions.

Before we can have a programme on this question, develop a line of tactics which could be adopted by the communist parties in eastern countries, it is necessary that the various sections of the International pay a little more attention to and study these questions a little more carefully. It should not be gratuitous work on their part, because capitalism, the power of the bourgeoisie in their own countries, is today very closely interlinked with the situation in the colonial countries, because imperialism today is trying to save itself by developing colonial countries industrially.

During the war imperialism, particularly British imperialism, found it necessary to slacken its monopoly rights over the economic and industrial life of the backward colonial countries. So, a country like India, which was maintained as an agricultural reserve, as a source of raw material for British industries for more than 150 years, was allowed sufficient industrial development during the war. The dislocation of the capitalist equilibrium in Europe forces imperialism to look out for new markets by which the equilibrium of world capitalism can be re-established. They are trying to find this in the colonial countries by developing industrially countries like India and China: they are trying to find the solution of the problem that way. Depending on the resources in the colonial countries, imperialism tries to carry its offensive against the European proletariat to a crushing victory.

We must not lose sight of this tendency. We may argue this way. Well, this cannot be done because imperialism means that colonial countries should be left in a backward state economically so that the goods manufactured in the metropolitan countries can be sold there. Yes, but that is a very mechanical way of looking on these things. We must not forget that if the coat tail of the Chinaman is lengthened by a few inches the textile production of the world will have to be double. By industrial development the standard of living of 400 million Chinese can be raised and thus the textile production of the world doubled. Industrial development of China does not necessarily mean the contraction of production in the home countries. These countries when they are industrially developing must have machinery, etc. which they cannot produce by themselves, and so while perhaps in certain kind of goods the colonial market can be limited and reduced, yet so far as machinery is concerned they must be extended.

Then again that part of the production of England and other countries which used to be sold in central and western European markets must find new consumers, and this can be done in the colonial countries by developing the power of consumption.

So, you see the readjustment of imperial capital with the native capital in the colonial and semicolonial countries will play a big part in the wide scheme of capitalist offensive. In order to be able to fight the capitalist offensive in European countries we must coordinate our forces with the movement in the colonial and semicolonial countries.

The experience of the last two years in coordinating our forces with the bourgeois nationalist parties in these countries shows that through the medium of these parties we can utilise the bourgeois revolutionary parties to the greatest extent.

This leads us to the question of the united anti-imperialist front. Side by side with the united labour front in the western countries we must organise the united anti-imperialist front in the colonial and semicolonial countries. The object of this anti-imperialist united front is to organise all the available revolutionary forces in a big united front against imperialism. The organisations of this front, the experience of the last two years has shown us, could not be realised under the leadership of the bourgeois parties. So we have to develop our parties in these countries in order to take the lead in the organisation of this front. Just as the tactics of the united proletarian front leads to accumulation of organisational strength in the western countries and unmasks and discloses the treachery and compromising tactics of the social-democratic parties by bringing them into active conflict so will the campaign of the united anti-imperialist front in the colonial countries liberate the leadership of the movement from the timid and hesitating bourgeoisie and bring the masses more actively in the forefront, through the most revolutionary social elements which constitute the basis of the movement, thereby securing the final victory.

(*Inprecor*, Vol. II, No. 116)

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(c) THESES ON THE EASTERN QUESTION

I. The Growth of the Revolutionary Movement in the East

The Second Congress of the Communist International basing itself on the work of Soviet administration in the East and the growth of the nationalist-revolutionary movement in the colonies outlined the principles of the national-colonial question in the period of prolonged struggle between imperialism and the proletarian dictatorship.

Since that time the struggle against imperialist oppression in the colonies and semicolonial countries has become considerably more acute as a consequence of the deepening postwar political and economic crises of imperialism.

Evidence of this is served by: (1) the collapse of the Sevres Treaty on the partition of Turkey and the possibility of the complete restoration of the national and political independence of the latter; (2) the stormy growth of a national-revolutionary movement in India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Morocco, China and Korea; (3) the hopeless internal crisis of Japanese imperialism giving rise to the rapid growth of elements of a bourgeois-democratic revolution in the country and the transition by the Japanese proletariat to independent class struggle; (4) the awakening of the labour movement in all countries of the East and the formation of communist parties almost in all parts of the East.

The facts enumerated above indicate a change in the social basis of the revolutionary movement in the colonies. This change leads to the anti-imperialist struggle becoming more acute: this struggle is no longer being led exclusively by the feudal classes and the national bourgeoisie which is preparing to compromise with imperialism.

The imperialist war of 1914-18 and the prolonged crisis which followed it, particularly in Europe, have weakened the power of the great powers over the colonies. On the other hand, these same circumstances are narrowing the economic bases and spheres of influence of world capitalism, have rendered imperialist rivalry for the colonies more acute and in this way have disturbed the equilibrium of the whole world imperialist system (the fight for oil, Anglo-

French conflict in Asia Minor, the Japanese-American rivalry for the domination of the Pacific Ocean, etc.).

It is precisely this weakening of imperialist pressure in the colonies, together with the increasing rivalry between various imperialist groups, that has facilitated the development of native capitalism in the colonies and semicolonial countries which are outgrowing the narrow framework of the domination of the imperialist great powers. Hitherto the capitalists of the great powers in maintaining their monopoly rights to secure super-profits from trade, industry and the taxation of backward countries have striven to isolate these from world economic intercourse. The demand for national and economic independence put forward by the national movements in the colonies serves to express the needs of bourgeois development in these countries. The growth of native productive forces in these colonies, therefore, causes an irreconcilable antagonism of interests between them and world imperialism, for the essence of imperialism consists in using the varying levels of development of productive forces in various parts of the economic world for the purpose of extracting monopoly super-profits.

II. Conditions of the Struggle

The backwardness of the colonies is reflected in the motley character of the national revolutionary movements against imperialism, which in their turn, reflect the varying states of transition from feudal and feudal-patriarchal relations to capitalism. This variety of conditions makes its impression upon the ideology of these movements. To the extent that capitalism in the colonial countries arises and develops from feudal bases in hybrid, imperfect and intermediary forms, which gives predominance above all to merchant capitalism, the rise of bourgeois democracy from feudal-bureaucratic and feudal-agrarian elements proceeds often by devious and protracted paths. This represents the chief obstacle for successful mass struggles against imperialist oppression as the foreign imperialists in all the backward countries convert the feudal (and partly also the semifeudal semibourgeois) upper classes of native society into agents

of their domination (military governors—Tuchuns—in China, the native aristocracy and tax farmers—the zamin-dars and talukdars—in India, the feudal bureaucracy in Persia, the agrarian-planter capital formations in Egypt, etc.).

For that reason the dominant classes in the colonies and the semicolonial countries are incapable and unwilling to lead the struggle against imperialism in so far as this struggle tends to become a revolutionary mass movement. Only where the feudal-patriarchal system has not decayed to such an extent as to completely separate the native aristocracy from the mass of the people, as among the nomadic and seminomadic peoples, can those upper classes take up the active leadership of the struggle against imperialist violence (Mesopotamia, Morocco, Mongolia).

In Moslem countries the nationalist movement at first expresses its ideology in religious-political watchwords of Pan-Islamism, which enables diplomats and officials of the great powers to exploit the prejudices and ignorance of the masses of the people to combat this movement (British imperialism's gains of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Arabism, the British plan of transferring the caliphate to India and the gambling of French imperialism with its "Moslem sympathies"). With the growth and expansion of the national liberation movement the religious political watchwords of Pan-Islamism are substituted by concrete political demands. The struggle for the separation of temporal power from the caliphate which took place in Turkey recently is evidence of this.

This main task common to all national revolutionary movements is to bring about national unity and achieve political independence. The real and consistent solution of this depends on the extent to which the national movement in any particular country is capable of attracting to itself the toiling masses and break off all connections with the reactionary feudal elements and include in its programme the social demands of the masses.

Being completely aware that the will of a nation for political independence in varying historical conditions can

be expressed by the most diverse classes, the Communist-International supports all national revolutionary movements against imperialism. At the same time it does not lose sight of the fact that only a consistent revolutionary line of policy based on the active support of the masses, and the unreserved break with all advocates of compromise with imperialism in the interests of maintaining class domination, can lead the oppressed masses to victory. The connection between the native bourgeoisie and the feudal reactionary elements enables the imperialists to make wide use of feudal anarchy, the rivalry between various leaders and tribes, the antagonism between town and country, the struggle between the castes and national religious sects etc. for the purposes of disorganising the popular movement (China, Persia, Kurdistan, Mesopotamia).

III. Agrarian Question

In the majority of countries in the East (India, Persia, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia) the agrarian question is of primary importance in the struggle for emancipation from the domination of the despotism of the great powers. Exploiting and ruining the peasant majorities in the backward nations, imperialism deprives them of the elementary means of existence while the low development of industry scattered among a few junctional points in the country renders it impossible for it to absorb the superfluous agrarian population which at the same time has no means of emigrating. The peasants remaining on the land are pauperised and converted into serfs. While in the advanced countries prior to the war, industrial crises served as regulators of social production, this function in the colonies is performed by famine. Vitally interested in securing the greatest profits with the least expenditure of capital, imperialism strives all it can to maintain in the backward countries the feudal usurious form of exploiting labour power. In some countries like India, it assumes the monopoly rights of the native feudal state to the land and converts the land tribute into feudal dues and the zamindars and talukdars into its agents. In other countries it extracts ground-rent through

the native organisations of large landowners, as is the case in Persia, Morocco, Egypt, etc. The struggle for the emancipation of the land from feudal dues and feudal obstacles thus assumes the character of a struggle for national emancipation against imperialism and feudal large landownership (examples of this are the Moplah rising against the landowners and the British in India in the autumn of 1921 and the revolt of the Sikhs in 1922).

Only the agrarian revolution aiming at the expropriation of the large landowners can rouse the vast peasant masses destined to have a decisive influence in the struggles against imperialism. The fear of agrarian watchwords on the part of the bourgeois nationalists (India, Persia, Egypt) is evidence of the close ties existing between the native bourgeoisie with the large feudal and feudal-bourgeois landowners and their ideological and political dependence upon the latter. The hesitation and wavering of this class must be used by the revolutionary elements for systematic criticism and exposure of the lack of resolution of the bourgeois leaders of the national movement. It is precisely this lack of resolution that hinders the organisation of the toiling masses as is proved by the bankruptcy of the tactics of noncooperation in India.

The revolutionary movement in the backward countries of the East cannot be successful unless it is based on the action of the masses of the peasantry. For that reason the revolutionary parties in all eastern countries must define their agrarian programme which should demand the complete abolition of feudalism and its survivals expressed in the forms of large landownership and tax farming. In order that the peasant masses may be drawn into active participation in the struggle for national liberation, it is necessary to proclaim the radical reform of the basis of land ownership. It is necessary also to compel the bourgeois nationalist parties to the greatest extent possible to adopt this revolutionary agrarian programme.

IV. The Labour Movement in the East

The young labour movement in the East is a product of the development of native capitalism during the last few years. Hitherto the working class in the East, even its fundamental nucleus, has been in a state of transition, on the path from small handicraft to large capitalist industry. In so far as the bourgeois nationalist intelligentsia draws the revolutionary movement of the working class into the struggle against imperialism, this intelligentsia provides the leaders for the embryonic trade union organisations and their sections in the first stages of their development. In the first stages, these movements do not extend beyond the limits of the "common national" interests of bourgeois democracy (strikes against imperialist bureaucracy and administration in China and India). Frequently, as was already shown at the Second Congress of the Comintern, representatives of bourgeois nationalism exploiting the moral and political authority of Soviet Russia, and playing to the class instincts of the workers, clothed their bourgeois democratic strivings in "socialist" and "communist" forms, in order by these means, sometimes unconsciously, to divert the embryonic proletarian organisations from the direct tasks of class organisations (the Eshil Oıdu in Turkey which painted Pan-Turkism in communist colours, the "state socialism" advocated by some representatives of the Kuomintang in China).

In spite of this, the trade union and political movement of the working class in the backward countries has made considerable progress in recent years. The formation of independent proletarian class parties in almost all the eastern countries is a remarkable fact, although the overwhelming majority of these parties must still undergo considerable internal reorganisation in order to free themselves from amateurity, sectarianism and other defects. The fact that the Communist International estimated the potential importance of the labour movement in the East right from the very beginning is a fact of colossal importance, as it is a clear expression of the real international unity of the proletariat of the whole world under the banner of

communism. The Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals to this very day have not found support in a single backward country precisely because they play the part of "servants" to European and American imperialism.

V. The General Tasks of the Communist Parties in the East

While the bourgeois nationalists regard the labour movement merely from the point of view of its importance as a means for securing victory for themselves, the international proletariat regards the young labour movement of the East from the point of view of its revolutionary future. Under capitalism the backward countries cannot achieve modern technique and culture without paying enormous tribute in the form of barbarous exploitation and oppression for the advantage of the capitalists of the great powers. Alliance with the proletariat of advanced countries is dictated not merely by the interests of a common struggle against imperialism but also by the fact that only by a victory of the proletariat of the advanced countries can the workers of the East obtain unselfish aid in the development of their productive forces. An alliance with the proletariat in the West will lay the path towards an international federation of Soviet Republics. The Soviet system, for the backward nations represents the least painful form of transition from primitive conditions of existence to the highest culture of communism, destined to take the place of the capitalist method of production and distribution all over the world. This is proved by the experience of the development of the Soviet system in the *liberated colonies formerly comprising the Russian empire*. Only a Soviet form of administration is able to guarantee the consistent fulfilment of the agrarian peasant revolution. The specific conditions of agriculture in certain countries of the East (artificial irrigation) maintained in the past by a peculiar organisation of collective cooperation on a feudal-patriarchal basis and disrupted by predatory capitalism demand also a state organisation of such a type as would be able systematically and in an organised manner to serve public needs. As a corollary, the organisation of special

climatic and historical conditions the cooperation of small producers in the East is destined to play an important role in the transition period.

The objective tasks of colonial revolutions exceed the limit of bourgeois democracy by the very fact that a decisive victory is incompatible with the domination of world imperialism. While the native bourgeoisie and bourgeois intelligentsia are the pioneers of colonial revolutionary movements, with the entry of proletarian and semiproletarian peasant masses into these movements, however, the rich bourgeoisie and bourgeois landlords begin to leave it as the social interests of the masses assume prominence. The young proletariat of the colonies is still confronted by a prolonged struggle over a whole historical epoch, a struggle against imperialist exploitation and against its own ruling classes, striving to secure in its own hands the monopoly of all the advantages of industrial and cultural development and to maintain the masses of the toilers in their previous "primitive" state.

The struggle to secure influence over the peasant masses should prepare the native proletariat for the role of political leadership. Only after having accomplished this preparatory work on its own training and that of the social classes closely allied to itself will it be possible to advance against bourgeois democracy which, amidst the conditions of the backward East, bears a more hypocritical character than the West.

The refusal of the communists in the colonies to participate against imperialist oppression on the pretext of alleged "defence" of independent class interests is opportunism of the worst kind calculated only to discredit the proletarian revolution in the East. No less harmful must be recognised the attempt to isolate oneself from the immediate and everyday interests of the working class for the sake of "national unity" or "civil peace" with bourgeois democracy. The communist and working class parties in the colonies and semicolonial countries are confronted by a twofold task: on the one hand to fight for the most radical solutions of the problems of bourgeois democratic revolu-

tion, directed to the conquest of political independence, and on the other to organise the workers and peasants to fight for their special class interests and to take advantage of the antagonism existing in the nationalist bourgeois democratic camp. In putting forward special demands, these parties stimulate and release revolutionary energy which finds no outlet in bourgeois liberal demands. The working class in the colonies and semicolonial countries must know that only by deepening and extending the struggle against the imperialism of the great powers can its role as revolutionary leader be fulfilled. On the other hand, the economic and political organisations and the political training of the working class and the semiproletarian classes will facilitate and extend the revolutionary scope of the struggle against imperialism.

The communist parties in the colonies and semicolonial countries in the East, which are still in a more or less embryonic stage, must take part in every movement that gives them access to the masses. At the same time, however, they must conduct an energetic campaign against the patriarchal and craft prejudices and bourgeois influences in the labour unions, in order to protect these embryonic organisations from reformist tendencies and in order to convert them into mass fighting organisations. They must exert all their efforts to organise the numerous agricultural labourers and artisans of both sexes on the basis of defending their immediate everyday interests.

VI. The United Anti-Imperialist Front

While in the West amidst the conditions of the transition period, which is a period of organised accumulation of strength, the watchword of the united labour front was put forward, in the colonial East it is at present necessary to put forward the watchword of a united anti-imperialist front. The expediency of these tactics is dictated by the prospects of a prolonged struggle against world imperialism demanding the mobilisation of all revolutionary elements. This mobilisation becomes all the more necessary from the fact that the native ruling classes are inclined to

make compromise with the foreign capitalists directed against the fundamental interests of the masses of the people. Just as the watchword of the united labour front in the West facilitates the exposure of the social democratic betrayal of the interests of the proletariat, so the watchword of the united anti-imperialist front will facilitate the exposure of the wavering and hesitation of certain bourgeois nationalist groups in the East. This watchword will also help to develop the revolutionary will and to make more definite the class consciousness of the masses of the toilers and bring them into the front ranks of the struggle, not only against imperialism but against all survivals of feudalism.

The labour movement in the colonies and semicolonial countries must first of all secure for itself the positions of an independent factor in the common anti-imperialist front. Only on the basis of the recognition of this independence and the maintenance of complete independence is a temporary agreement with bourgeois democracy permissible and necessary. The proletariat must support and put forward partial demands such as independent democratic republic, abolition of all feudal rights and privileges, and enfranchisement of women, etc. in view of the fact that the present correlation of forces does not permit it to carry out its Soviet programme. At the same time it must strive to put forward such demands as will assist in establishing the closest possible contact between the peasantry and semi-proletarian masses and the labour movement. To explain to the masses of the toilers the necessity for an alliance with the international proletariat and the Soviet Republics is one of the most important tasks of the tactics of the anti-imperialist front. The colonial revolution can be victorious and defend its gains only in conjunction with the proletarian revolution in the advanced countries.

The danger of an agreement being arrived at between the bourgeois nationalists and one or several of the rival imperialist powers in the semicolonial countries (China, Persia) or in countries striving to secure political independence by exploiting the rivalry between the imperialists

(Turkey) is greater than in the colonies. Such an agreement would signify an irrational division of power between the native ruling classes and the imperialists, and under the cloak of formal independence will leave the country in the same position of a buffer semicolonial state subordinate to world imperialism.

Recognising the permissibility and inevitability of partial and temporary compromises for the purposes of securing a respite in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism, the working class must, however, irreconcilably resist every attempt at avowed or tacit division of power between the imperialist and the native ruling classes aiming at the preservation by the latter of their class privileges. The demand for a close alliance between the proletariat and Soviet Republics serves as the banner of the united anti-imperialist front. Simultaneously with the advocacy of this demand, a most determined struggle must be conducted for a most democratic political regime, in order to undermine the power of the most politically and socially reactionary elements and preserve the freedom of organisation for the toilers in their struggle for their class interests (the demand for democratic republics, agrarian reforms, reforms of taxation, the basis of wide self-government, labour legislation, the protection of child labour, the protection of mothers and infants, etc.). Even in independent Turkey, the working class does not enjoy freedom of organisation, and this may serve as a typical example of the attitude of the bourgeois nationalists towards the proletariat.

VII. The Tasks of the Proletariat on the Pacific Coast

The necessity for the establishment of an anti-imperialist front is dictated also by the constant growth of imperialist rivalry. This rivalry has today assumed such acute forms, that a fresh world war, the arena of which will be the Pacific Ocean, is inevitable unless an international revolution forestalls it.

The Washington conference was an attempt to obviate this danger, but as a matter of fact it succeeded only in rendering the antagonisms between the imperialists more

profound and acute. The recent conflicts between Wu Pei-fu and Chang Tso-lin in China was a direct consequence of the failure of Japanese and Anglo-American capitalism to harmonise their interests at Washington. The new world war which menaces the world will affect not only Japan, America and England, but also other capitalist powers (France, Holland, etc.) and threatens to be even more destructive than the war of 1914-18.

The task of the communist parties in the colonial and semicolonial countries on the Pacific Coast is to conduct an extensive propaganda to explain to the masses the oncoming danger, to call upon them to take up an active struggle for national liberation and to teach them to regard Soviet Russia as the bulwark of all the oppressed and exploited masses.

The communist parties in the imperialist countries, America, Japan, England, Australia, Canada, in view of the threatening danger must not limit themselves merely to a propaganda against war, but must exert all their efforts to remove all the disruptive factors from the labour movement in their respective countries and to prevent the capitalists taking advantage of national and racial antagonisms. These factors are: the immigration question and cheap coloured labour.

The system of indentured labour to this very day is the main system of recruiting coloured workers for the sugar plantations of the Southern Pacific to which workers are transported from China and India. This fact has compelled the workers in the imperialist countries to demand anti-immigration laws against coloured workers as is the case in America and Australia. These prohibition laws deepen the antagonism between white and coloured workers and breaks and weakens the unity of the labour movement.

The communist parties of America, Canada and Australia must conduct an energetic campaign against anti-immigration laws and must explain to the masses of the proletariat in these countries that these laws, by arousing national hatreds, in the last recourse only damage them.

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anti-immigration laws in order to maintain the free import of cheap labour, and thus force down the wages of the white workers. This attempted offensive of the capitalists can be successfully averted only by the immigrant workers being absorbed in the existing white labour unions. At the same time the demand must be put forward for raising the wage of coloured workers to the level of white workers. Such tactics will expose the plans of the capitalists and at the same time clearly show to the coloured workers that the international proletariat has no racial prejudices.

In order to carry out these tactics, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat of the countries on the Pacific should gather at a Pan-Pacific Conference in order to work out correct lines of actions and to decide on the proper forms of organisation for the purpose of uniting all the proletarians among the races of the Pacific.

VIII. The Task of the Communist Parties in the Home Countries

The great importance of the colonial revolutionary movements for the cause of the international proletarian revolution makes necessary an intensification of the work in the colonies, particularly by the communist parties of the imperialist countries.

French imperialism is basing all its calculations on the suppression of the proletarian revolutionary struggle in France and Europe by using its colonial slaves as the fighting reserve of the counter-revolution.

British and American imperialism continues to divide the labour movement by maintaining on its side the aristocracy of labour by promises of a share in its super-profits obtained by the exploitation of the colonies

Every communist party in the countries possessing colonies must undertake the task of organising systematic ideological and material assistance to the labour and revolutionary movement in the colonies. They must carry out a persistent and determined struggle against the quasi-socialist, colonising tendencies prevailing among certain categories of well-paid European workers in the colonies.

European communist workers in the colonies must strive to rally around themselves the native proletariat and gain its confidence by concrete economic demands (equal pay for white and native workers, protection of labour, labour insurance, etc).

The formation of exclusive European communist organisations in the colonies (Egypt, Algeria) is a concealed form of colonialism and is an aid to imperialist interests. The formation of communist organisations on national lines is a contradiction of the principle of proletarian internationalism. All parties belonging to the Communist International must unceasingly explain to the masses of toilers the importance of the struggle against imperialist domination in the backward countries. The communist parties working in the imperialist countries should set up a special colonial committee of their ECs for this purpose. The aid rendered by the Communist International to the communist parties of the East must be expressed in the first place by helping to establish a press and the publication of journals and periodicals in the native languages. Special attention must be given to work among the European labour organisations and among occupational troops to the colonies. The communist parties in the imperialist countries must not allow a single opportunity to slip by to expose the predatory policies of their imperialist governments and their bourgeois and opportunist parties.

(*Inprecor*, Vol. II, No. 118, 30 December 1922)

Gaya Session of National Congress

The national political developments in the country during the year 1922 were as follows:

The Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress launched the noncooperation movement. Gandhiji was placed in charge of the movement. The movement was actually to start from Bardoli but on 1 February 1922, Gandhiji made his last appeal to the government. On 6 February the government rejected the demands of Gandhiji and the nation. Gandhiji's ultimatum and rejoinder to the government went forth from Bardoli on 7 February. On 8 February the news of happenings in Chauri Chaura (UP) were received in Bardoli.

The well-known Bardoli Working Committee resolution withdrawing the movement was adopted at the insistence of Gandhiji on 11 February. On 16 February *Young India* carried an editorial making an agonising appraisal and justifying the Bardoli withdrawal. At the same time Gandhiji's reply to "imperialist repression and arrogant boasting" was: "the fight commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish... submission to insolent challenge is an utter impossibility". This general statement however did not counteract the harm done and the confusion created by the Bardoli withdrawal.

Imperialist government arrested Gandhiji on 10 March and his trial began on the 18th. His historic statement in the court has been referred to in a foregoing document.

On 9 June 1922 AICC met at Lucknow and resolved that the civil disobedience movement will have to be undertaken and appointed a Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee to report on the political situation in the country. From August 1922 the daily demonstrations of Guruk

Bagh commenced. The report of the Inquiry Committee was submitted to C. R. Das, who was now released. He was the president-elect for the forthcoming Gaya congress. In the report itself the opinion on the question of council entry or CD movement was divided. This was the central issue of sharp division of opinion before the Gaya congress. The AICC which met at Calcutta on 30 November 1922 could not resolve the differences.

Meanwhile the country was seething with spontaneous working class and peasant struggles. M. N. Roy's *One Year of Noncooperation* describes this in these words:

"Since the beginning of 1922, aside from innumerable lesser strikes, there were several, conducted on a wide scale such as the East Indian Railway strike involving 35,000 men and the jute mill workers' strike, among the peasantry, leaving aside the Moplah rebellion which required nine months for the government to suppress, were the intermittent revolts among the Akali Sikhs of the Punjab for the possession of temple lands, usurped by the corrupt priestcraft and protected by the government. The eka, or unity movement, among the peasants of United Provinces and Central India for resistance to rent and tax collection; the revolt of the Bhils and continuous unrest which calls for the presence of special soldiery among peasants of Punjab and Madras" (p. 75).

The story is carried forward in chapter XI of the book, entitled "The Explosion":

"It was at this psychological moment, on the very eve of the Congress session (Gaya) that the Vanguard Party, whose centre of activities, due to government repression, is in Europe, and which for the past two years, by means of manifestos, leaflets, books and its bimonthly organ the Vanguard (later The Advance Guard) has been setting forth the viewpoint, principles and tactics of socialism as applied to the Indian movement; it was at this crucial moment that the Vanguard Party issued a social democratic programme nicely adjusted to meet the present requirements of the Indian situation, and caused it to be circulated in India and among the nationalists and students abroad by means of a brochure entitled *What Do We Want?* and a leaflet issued from Switzerland called 'A Programme for the Indian National Congress'. The brochure, a popularised version of the programme, was circulated in India by the middle of November and was promptly prohibited by the government.

"The programme itself was published in December last number of *The Advance Guard* and sent out together with the leaflet, in time to reach India on the very eve of the Congress session—it did in fact arrive by December 19th and was prohibited by an order of the Bengal government on December 26th."

On 21 December 1922, Reuters newsagency flashed the summary of M. N. Roy's programme. The despatch was published in all imperialist and nationalist English dailies of the time: the *Statesman* and

Englishman (Calcutta) and the Times of India (Bombay) published the dispatch in full on 22 December, the Pioneer and the Independent (Allahabad), Bombay Chronicle (Bombay) and Amrita Bazar Patrika (Calcutta) published the same on 23 December; and the Leader (Allahabad) did it on 24 December. The Statesman, Calcutta, captioned the despatch with glaring headlines "Bolshevik Alms in India", "Separation Plan", "Open Revolution Advocated", "Amazing Programme". The mouthpiece of the British colonial rulers of India was only revealing its bankrupt strategy of dividing the new rising force represented by the communists from the nationalist movement (cf *One Year of Noncooperation*, pp 117-18).

The Times of India (Bombay), the organ of the local British big business, commented "Reuters Agency has been giving to M. N. Roy a publicity which is seldom accorded even to a prime minister's most serious utterance. Why should it have been thought worth while to cable three columns of Bolshevik delirium to this country?" The British big business organ knew that such publicity in India has only an opposite effect.

In fact the Indian nationalist dailies of the day reacted entirely differently. The Amrita Bazar Patrika (27 December) commented saying, "What is there in the programme to raise such a scare about? They are the demands of the Indian national movement." The Servant published Saklatvala's interview to the Hindu recommending the Congress to adopt labour and communist ideals.

As stated earlier, the copy of *The Advance Guard*, Vol 1, No. 5, and the leaflet "A Programme for the Indian National Congress" did reach India on the eve of the Gaya congress (latter part of December). The government of Bengal confiscated the same on 26 December 1922. All this served as an unsolicited publicity for the programme which was circulated at the Gaya congress, despite difficulties.

According to K. N. Joglekar's unpublished reminiscences, this manifesto was published in the Marathi daily *Rashtra Sevak* run by Jamnadas Mehta in Bombay, and was printed separately in English and sent to Dange at the session itself.

Both S. A. Dange and Singaravelu Chettiar were present at the session which also passed the following resolution on "Labour Organisation":

"Whereas this congress is of opinion that Indian labour should organise with a view to improve and promote their well-being and secure to them their just rights and also to prevent exploitation of Indian labour and of Indian resources: It is resolved that this congress, while welcoming the move made by the All-India Trade Union Congress and various kisan sabhas in organising the workers of India, hereby appoints the following committee, with power to co-opt, to assist the executive council of the All-India Trade Union Congress for the organisation of Indian labour both agricultural and industrial

"Committee 1. Mr C. F. Andrews, 2. Mr J. M. Sen Gupta, 3 Mr S. N. Haldar, 4 Swami Dinanand, 5 Dr D. D. Sathaye, 6. Mr M. Singaravelu Chettiar" (India in 1922-23, pp 323-24).

Singaravelu's speech supporting this resolution is given in the documents.

Towards the end of 1922, M. N. Roy not only produced the "Action Programme of the Indian National Congress" which was circulated at the Gaya congress, but also wrote a pamphlet bearing the title *What Do We Want?*, which gave a popular exposition of the same. It was a programme of anti-imperialist, antifeudal revolution, the main planks of which were political independence, abolition of landlordism, nationalisation of public utilities, minimum wage and eight-hour day for labour and workers' control of industry. This was the first attempt to formulate a programme for India which was to be the basis of the united anti-imperialist front bringing together all the anti-imperialist classes, including the national bourgeoisie, in the struggle for complete independence from Imperialism, as visualised in the theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.

Defining the "outlines of swaraj" under "Political Independence" (the first chapter) the pamphlet puts forward "a political programme to be fulfilled after the overthrow of foreign rule". It says:

"We demand the formation of such a programme of national reconstruction, which shall contain the following measures:

"(1) that our national state (swaraj) will be based on the principle of universal suffrage,

"(2) that the principal means of production, distribution and exchange (land, mines, factories, railways, waterways, etc) will be owned by the democratic state and operated under the control of workers' committees, elected by and from among the workers employed therein,

"(3) that landlordism be abolished, and the ownership of land be vested in the state, which will distribute it among those who cultivate it" (p. 15)

This formulation of the programme is extremely sectarian. Instead of putting forward the demand for the nationalisation of banks, mines, railways and waterways and heavy industry owned by the British, the demand is raised for taking over all factories etc. The slogan of workers' control is prematurely raised. This latter demand was raised for the purpose of protecting the rights of the workers. In another place the pamphlet says.

"The protection and promotion of the welfare of the working class therefore demands a certain degree of supervision and restraint over capitalist ownership of industries. This supervision and restraint will be exercised by the workers' councils, elected from among and by the workers in the factories. These councils will see that the laws regarding the protection of the workers are enforced and that the profit accruing to the owner does not exceed a certain limit set by the

democratic government In this way the national wealth, increased by the development of industries, will be as evenly distributed as is possible within the limits of capitalist ownership" (p. 36).

"Workers' control" over industries will be possible only under socialism. The appropriate demand for the stage of the struggle for independence is the implementation of the right of the workers to build trade union organisation, their right to strike, which enable them to protect themselves and carry on the struggle for the next stage of democratic revolution leading to socialism in the post-independence period

We are reproducing here the last chapter of the pamphlet *What Do We Want?*. It outlines "the revolutionary mass action" to achieve complete independence. The pamphlet was written soon after the Fourth Congress of the CI had put forward the slogan and line of the united anti-imperialist front, under the direct leadership and guidance of Lenin. But it is apparent from this pamphlet and its concluding chapter that the author has not imbibed the spirit and the line of the famous "Theses on the Eastern Question". Roy continues here his sectarian contraposition of the worker-peasant movement to the national liberation struggle. The formulation of a correct, convincing programme of complete independence enables the working class to form an alliance with the peasantry and the middle class intelligentsia to bring a new striking power to the national independence movement and to play a leading role in the same, only if it knows how to come forward as the unifier of all anti-imperialist and antifeudal forces. Judged in this way the sectarian approach and the contraposition, referred to above, are strongly imprinted on this extract.

Another document reproduced here is the text of the "Message of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International to the Gaya Congress" taken from the documents of the Kanpur Conspiracy Case (1924) printed by the court. It has also been published by Muzaffar Ahmad in his book (MCPI, pp 281-86).

The original typed text of this message was sent by M. N. Roy enclosed along with letters addressed to S. A. Dange in Bombay, M. Singaravelu in Madras and Muzaffar Ahmad in Calcutta. Originals of the first two letters which were written in English with their enclosures were intercepted by the police and retained. The letter to Muzaffar Ahmad which was in Bengali was photographed and the original sent on. This information is given in the sessions court judgments of the Kanpur Conspiracy Case and also in the case against Roy when he was arrested and tried in India in January 1932.

The date of the letters, which were exhibit nos. 6, 7 and 8 in the Kanpur Case, was 12 December 1922. They were written from Berlin soon after Roy returned there after the conclusion of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (5 December 1922). All these letters "contained the request that the addressees should get printed enclosure which was the same and was a letter to the Gaya Congress" (sessions court

judgment in the case "King-Emperor vs M. N. Roy", dated 9 January 1932).

Whether the typewritten text was printed as a leaflet and distributed at the Gaya congress is not known. The three addressees, viz Dange, Singaravelu and Muzaffar, never received the text so they could not do it. Roy must have sent copies to his other contacts in Bengal and elsewhere, which may have slipped through but the message does not seem to have been printed and distributed at the Gaya session of the Congress.

But it was printed and published by Roy in his *The Advance Guard* dated 1 January 1923, which must have reached at least some people in India, but long after the Gaya session was over. This issue was exhibit No 9 in the Kanpur Case. But the present writer did not find it in the record of the Kanpur Case, as preserved in the record room of the district court, Kanpur, when he went there with special permission to examine the documents.

The sessions court judgment in the Kanpur Case gives a pageful of "important passages" from the message which tally completely with their counterparts in the full text produced here. It quotes almost in full the concluding portion. It contains the four points which the National Congress is asked always to keep in view. The crux of the political programme recommended to the National Congress is "the establishment of democratic republic, completely independent of any foreign control" "through a revolution". It calls for the "adoption of an economic programme" and says, "By leading the rebellious poor peasantry against reactionary and loyalist landed aristocracy, the Congress will on the one hand strike its roots deeply into the masses and, on the other, will assail the very bedrock of British rule." The judgment specially underlines the following sentence:

"The native army, which maintains British domination in India, is recruited from among the poor peasantry. So a programme of agrarian evolution will win the native troops to the cause of national freedom."

This message of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern to the Gaya session of the National Congress is also referred to in the sessions court judgment in the case "King-Emperor vs M. N. Roy" (January 1932). Here we get additional information that it was mentioned by Roy in his letter to C. R. Das. Together with the "Open Letter to C. R. Das" published in these documents Roy sent another typewritten letter to C. R. Das under his own signature. This was put in as exhibit 19(1) in the M. N. Roy case. Its contents are summarised in the judgment as follows:

"It is an attempt to win over the addressee to communism and more especially to the programme for the Gaya congress. In this letter Roy claims the programme as his creation (not that of his party) and he also says he is the author of *What Do We Want?*. He further claims to have obtained the support of the Communist International and to have got from it the letter to the Gaya Congress (exhibit 9) and invite Mr Das to Europe" (emphasis added).

This letter to C. R. Das contains the following passage :

"The Indian National Congress need not go abegging for sympathy at the door of opportunist bourgeois governments. It can count upon the unflinching support of the most powerful revolutionary body of the world and the only government which has defeated the combined might of the capitalist world stands at the vanguard of this international revolutionary organisation. Let not the Indian workers and peasants lose this great support in their fight for national and eventual social liberation."

It was intercepted by the police and not allowed to reach C. R. Das. But it is quite likely that another copy may have reached him at the time of the Gaya congress which was presided over by him.

7. Documents Regarding Gaya Congress and After

(a) ON THE EVE OF GAYA

The thirty-seventh annual session of the Indian National Congress at Gaya will be a landmark in the history of our national struggle. Last year the Congress met at Ahmedabad when the noncooperation movement was at its highest. It had reached the pinnacle and was bound to decline if new measures were not adopted to push it forward to a more advanced stage. The period of agitation was over, that of action should have begun. But it was not to be. The adoption of such measures required a boldness and a revolutionary vision which our leaders did not possess. The inevitable consequence was the confusion and demoralisation that reigned in our camp since the beginning of the year. The government, which was always on the alert, came down upon us with the heavy hand of repression as soon as the first signs of our internal weakness were revealed by the hesitating policy of the Congress.

In the manifesto to the Ahmedabad Congress we sounded the alarm in these words:

"The greatest problem before the thirty-sixth congress is how to enlist the full-hearted support of the people in the

national cause, how to make the ignorant masses follow the banner of swaraj. In order to solve this problem the first thing necessary is to know, what is it that ails the masses? What do they want? What is needed for improving the immediate environment of their material existence? Because only by including the redress of their immediate grievances in its programme will the Congress be able to assume the practical leadership of the masses of the people."

This was not done. The Congress gave the masses a stone instead of bread. It denounced their every revolutionary action. It upheld the interests of the landlords as against the surging tide of peasant revolt. Consequently what we predicted in our manifesto has come to pass. As a political body the Congress is dead. The noncooperation movement has lost all its potentiality. We said further in the same manifesto:

"If the Congress aspires to assume the leadership of the masses without founding itself upon the awakening mass energy, it will be relegated to the dead past in order to share the ignominy of its predecessor. To enlist the conscious support of the masses, it should approach them not with high politics and towering idealism, but with readiness to help them secure their immediate wants, then gradually to lead them forward. . . Failing to do so, with all its zeal for noncooperation, for all its determination to have the Sevres Treaty revised, despite its doctrine of soul force, the Congress will have to give in to another organisation which will grow out of the ranks of the common people with the object of fighting for their interests."

The Congress has failed to do so and the time has come for it to abdicate. This function will take place at the coming annual session. But where is the revolutionary element that is destined to step into the place thus vacated? The objective forces making for the crystallisation of such a new leadership of our movement are operating all over the country. They are being expressed through the ever-growing peasant revolts and strikes. What is needed is a political organ of these forces of social economics to bring them to bear upon the Congress. There must be a political party

which will plant the national movement on a revolutionary foundation.

The Congress cannot remain devoid of all political potentiality as at present. Attempts will be made at Gaya to drag it out of this bog of metaphysical degeneration. Those who want to transform it into an organ of constitutional democracy are mobilising their forces. There is a great rift within the ranks of the Congress. It is an open secret. The rightwing of the Congress differs very little from the liberals and Besantine home rulers. Its fusion with the latter is inevitable, sooner or later. Before the united front of these pragmatic politicians the orthodox noncooperators will not be able to hold their ground. By their own mistake, committed willingly, the ground has been taken from under their feet. So if a third political faction, embodying the revolutionary social forces, does not appear on the scene, reconquest of the Congress by the moderates and the Besantine clique is a foregone conclusion or the Congress will cease to occupy the front ranks of the national army: a united bourgeois party will usurp the position. The organisation of this third factor, the leader of the future, the standard-bearer of revolutionary nationalism, is our task. The elements that are destined to go into its composition exist in every part of the country. They are in operation often without being aware of each other. They should be brought together into a national organisation, which should face the scheming politicians with a clearly formulated programme of action. The combination of the right elements will put forward a body of demands reflecting the interests of the upper and middle classes. We must meet with a *programme advocating the interests of the common people*. If the vacillating orthodox noncooperators will have the courage and revolutionary idealism to subscribe to our programme we will stand behind them in their fight against the liberals, representing the rich industrial and commercial class. If they fail to rise up to the situation, which is very likely, we will take up the fight and save the Congress from the threatened relapse into compromising moderatism.

Revolutionary nationalists prepare for the fight which is

drawing near. The solution of the problem that confronts you demands a realistic orientation of the situation. Neither sentimental idealism nor romantic conspiracies will do. We must take an increasingly aggressive part in the leadership of the movement. But to be able to do so we must have organic connection with the most revolutionary social elements. We must be their standard-bearers. We must become their means of political expression. What are these revolutionary elements?

All the elements participating in the national movement are doing so impelled by their respective economic interests. The merchants and manufacturers want wider scope for the investment of their growing capital. National autonomy to them means a greater privilege of exploiting the natural resources and labour power of the country, with the sole object of making more profit. Their programme is, therefore, protection to native industries—fiscal autonomy. The rich intellectuals want power and progress through the means of increased political rights. Therefore, they fight with the slogan of provincial autonomy and complete Indianisation of the public services. The semi-intellectual lower middle class strives to save itself from dire starvation in which it has submerged and which leads to steady degeneration physically and morally. It does not find any hope in the programme of the upper class political parties; therefore, it advocates a more radical change in the present system. But its radicalism stops short of revolution and we find it talking of a vague swaraj by which some mythical golden age is depicted. Timidity and irresoluteness make the lower middle class intellectuals become prophets of pacifism.

But there remains another section of society, a section that constitutes not only the overwhelming majority, but the productive power of the community. The toiling masses—the workers and peasants—stand in need of an all-round improvement of their economic as well as social conditions. This need cannot be satisfied by any economic concession made in favour of the native capitalist class nor by political reforms granted to satisfy the demands of the propertied classes. The lot of the working class can only be improved

by a thorough change of the present social system, based on the right of exploitation of man by man. And since the salvation of their class can and will be worked out by the workers themselves, they are the only relentless and uncompromising revolutionary force. They may still be unconscious of their mission and ignorant of their interests, but the objective forces are latent in them. In fact, they have begun to feel the impulse and have initiated the historic struggle for freedom.

Those, who will carry the voice of these revolutionary factors within the precincts of the Congress, will merit the future leadership of the national movement. Before them everything else will succumb. By them only the struggle for freedom will be carried to its final goal. The revolutionary leftwing in process of organisation must be the political leader of the social elements objectively most revolutionary.

The leftwing must begin the fight by bringing forward a programme of action, a programme which will keep the Congress in close touch with the rising masses and which will develop the mass movement by all conceivable means. This programme must contain such clauses as the fight for higher wages for the workers, an eight-hour day, the recognition of unions, the right of strike, abolition of landlordism, *reduction of rents and taxes, strong measures for checking* the excesses of the usurers and other measures that will correspond to the immediate grievances of the workers and the peasants.

Let us go to Gaya, not to see the Congress resurrected as a political party of the bourgeoisie, but to indicate to it a revolutionary path. It will be a fight which can be fought only by those with determination and a clear revolutionary vision. It will be a fight against the most economically and politically advanced section of the people on the one hand, and against the social reactionaries on the other. We must save the situation. Let us prepare for the struggle.

(The Aftermath of Noncooperation.)

lated to give fresh impetus to the waning enthusiasm of the masses and thus draw them into the political struggle.

The general lines of this programme have been indicated by us repeatedly since last year. The adoption of such a programme cannot be postponed any longer if the movement is to be carried forward. The sincerity of the various factions participating in the Congress will be tested by their readiness to subscribe to a programme, calculated to intensify the struggle. The voice of the great majority of the Indian people should be raised in the congress at Gaya and it should be made known that in the coming stage of our struggle this voice will have a decisive character. This voice can be raised through the medium of a programme which should be formulated and put forward by those revolutionaries who struggle for national liberation, not to advance the interests of certain small sections, but in order that the way to progress and prosperity is laid open before the majority of the people.

Gaya should mark the renaissance of the Congress. We must go there to herald this new phase of our movement and begin to fight to base the national struggle on a really revolutionary foundation by making it a vital problem to the masses.

(The Aftermath of Noncooperation.)

* * *

(c) MESSAGE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE GAYA CONGRESS

To the All India National Congress, Gaya, India.
Representative of the Indian People!

The Fourth Congress of the Communist International sends to you its heartiest greetings. We are chiefly interested in the struggle of the Indians to free themselves from British domination. In this historic struggle you have the fullest sympathy and support of the revolutionary proletarian masses of the imperialist countries including Great Britain.

We communists are quite aware of the predatory nature of western imperialism, which brutally exploits the peoples of the East and has held them forcibly in a backward eco-

(b) WHAT SHALL WE DO AT GAYA?

So it is clear what we shall do at Gaya. First of all, it will be necessary to declare that one phase of our struggle has come to an end and this declaration should logically be followed by the formulation of a programme commensurate with the socio-economic needs and aspirations of the broad masses, and of a new set of tactics to be employed in the new stage of the struggle. This is the only way by which the integrity, even the very existence of the Congress as the traditional organ of our national struggle can be preserved. Left to the mercy of orthodox noncooperation, it will receive nothing but a solemn burial at Gaya, and under the exclusive control of progressive rationalism it will lose all that revolutionary potentiality which lies in its organic connection with the masses. The historic development of social forces destine the first to be overthrown by the second, which is the most revolutionary contribution of the upper and middle classes to the national struggle.

The passing of the leadership of our movement into the hands of the progressive intellectuals will mark a step forward, because it will inevitably lead to a clarification of the ideology and consequently the tactics of the struggle. But devoid of any organic connection with the masses, the political extremism of the progressive intellectuals will not lead the Congress very far. Therefore, we must endeavour to strengthen the position of the coming leaders by showing them the way by which the revolutionary masses can be more and more involved in the political movement led by the Congress.

In order to do this effectively, the revolutionary factions believing in mass actions should form an opposition bloc within the Congress, with the object of criticising any attempt to lead the Congress away from the highroad of revolution, either in the name of philosophical pacifism or under the slogan of orderly progress and constructive action. This opposition bloc, which will eventually grow into the revolutionary party of the people destined to be the leader of the final struggle, should put forth a programme calcu-

lated to give fresh impetus to the waning enthusiasm of the masses and thus draw them into the political struggle.

The general lines of this programme have been indicated by us repeatedly since last year. The adoption of such a programme cannot be postponed any longer if the movement is to be carried forward. The sincerity of the various factions participating in the Congress will be tested by their readiness to subscribe to a programme, calculated to intensify the struggle. The voice of the great majority of the Indian people should be raised in the congress at Gaya and it should be made known that in the coming stage of our struggle this voice will have a decisive character. This voice can be raised through the medium of a programme which should be formulated and put forward by those revolutionaries who struggle for national liberation, not to advance the interests of certain small sections, but in order that the way to progress and prosperity is laid open before the majority of the people.

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We communists are quite aware of the predatory nature of western imperialism, which brutally exploits the peoples of the East and has held them forcibly in a backward eco-

omic state, in order that the insatiable greed of capitalism can be satisfied. The infamous methods by which British imperialism sucks the life blood of the Indian people are well known. They cannot be condemned too strongly; nor will simple condemnation be of any practical value. British rule in India was established by force and is maintained by force; therefore it can and will be overthrown only by a violent revolution. We are (not?) in favour of resorting to violence if it can be helped; but for self-defence, the people of India must adopt violent means, without which the foreign domination based upon violence cannot be ended. The people of India are engaged in this great revolutionary struggle. The Communist International is wholeheartedly with them.

The economic, social and cultural progress of the Indian people demands the complete separation of India from imperialist Britain. To realise this separation is the goal of revolutionary nationalism. This goal, however, cannot be attained by negotiation nor by peaceful means. Imperial connection in any form stands for nothing less than the control of the destinies of the Indian people by and for the interests of the British ruling class, at best this control will be exercised in conjunction with the native upper classes. But the control will be there, obstructing the freedom of the nation.

Dislocation of world capitalist economy, coupled with the strengthening of the world revolutionary nationalist movement caused by the awakening of the expropriated masses, is forcing imperialism to change its old methods of exploitation. It endeavours to win over the cooperation of the propertied upper classes by making them concessions. From the very beginning of its history the British government found a reliable ally in the feudal landowning class, whose dissolution was prevented by obstructing the growth of higher means of production. Feudalism and its relics are the bulwarks of reaction; economic forces, that give rise to the national consciousness of the people, cannot be developed without undermining their social foundation. So the forces that are inimical to British imperialism are, at the

same time, dangerous to the security of the feudal lords and modern landed aristocracy. Hence the loyalty of the latter to the foreign ruler.

The immediate economic interests of the propertied upper classes, as well as the prosperous intellectuals engaged either in liberal professions or high government offices are too closely interlinked with the established order to permit them to favour a revolutionary change. Therefore, they preach evolutionary nationalism whose programme is "self-government within the empire" to be realised gradually by peaceful and legal means.

This programme of constitutional democracy will not be opposed by the British government for ever, since it does not interfere with the final authority of imperialism. On the contrary its protagonists are the potential pillars of imperial domination.

The policy of liberal imperialism heralded in 1909 by the Morley-Minto reforms and inaugurated in 1919 by the introduction by the Government of India Act will culminate sooner or later in home rule or dominion status for India. The repetition of the fiasco of the Irish Free State and Egyptian "independence" can be expected in India. Those who look upon any such eventuality as a solution of the national question are to be counted as the henchmen of imperialism. The movement led by the National Congress must rid itself of all such elements and be free from any illusion about a "change of heart" on the part of the British. The Indian people must be free or be crushed to death by British imperialism; there is no middle course. And the people of India will never liberate themselves from the present slavery without a sanguinary revolutionary struggle.

The social-basis of a revolutionary nationalist movement cannot be all inclusive, because economic reasons do not permit all the classes to participate in it. Only those sections of the people, therefore, whose economic interests cannot be reconciled with imperialist exploitation under any makeshift arrangement, constitute the backbone of your movement. These sections embrace the overwhelming majority of the nation, since they include the bankrupt middle classes,

pauperised peasantry and the exploited workers. To the extent that these objectively revolutionary elements are led away from the influences of social reaction, and are free from vacillating and compromising leadership, tied up spiritually and materially with the feudal aristocracy and capitalist upper classes, to that extent grows the strength of the nationalist movement.

The last two years were a period of mighty revolutionary upheaval in India. The awakening of the peasantry and of the proletariat struck terror in the heart of the British. But the leadership of the National Congress failed the movement in the intensely revolutionary situation.

The relation of the Communist International with the struggle of the oppressed people is inspired by revolutionary idealism and based upon mutual interests. Our sympathy and support are not confined to empty phrases couched in sweet words. We must stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of India in their struggle against imperialism; therefore we will fail in our revolutionary duty if we do not point out to you the mistakes that weaken the struggle and harm the cause of Indian independence.

In leading the struggle for national liberation the Indian National Congress should keep the following points always in view:

- (1) that the normal development of the people cannot be assured unless imperialist domination is completely destroyed,
- (2) that no compromise with the British rulers will improve the position of the majority of the nation,
- (3) that the British domination cannot be overthrown without a violent revolution, and
- (4) that the workers and peasants are alone capable of carrying the revolution to victory.

Therefore, in order to declare its complete freedom from all connection with the reactionary upper classes, the National Congress should categorically declare that its political programme is the establishment of a democratic republic, completely independent of any foreign control. The vast majority of the nation, that is, the toiling masses, will

rally round this programme, since the present condition cannot be improved without a radical change in the existing system. Tireless and courageous agitation has to be carried on to win the masses for the cause of national liberation. The present spontaneous mass upheaval provides a very fertile field of propaganda. The necessity of developing the revolutionary consciousness of the masses demands the adoption of an economic programme, in addition to the political programme, of a republic to be established through a revolution. By leading the rebellious poor peasantry against the reactionary and loyalist landed aristocracy, the Congress will on the one hand strike its roots deeply into the masses, and, on the other, will assail the very bedrock of British rule. The native army, which maintains British domination in India, is recruited from among the poor peasantry. So a programme of agrarian revolution will win the native troops to the cause of national freedom.

In conclusion we express our confidence in the ultimate success of your cause which is the destruction of British imperialism by the revolutionary might of the masses.

Let us assure you again of the support and cooperation of the advanced proletariat of the world in this historic struggle of the Indian people.

Down with British imperialism! Long live the free people of India!

With fraternal greetings,

HUMBERT-DROZ,
Secretary.

*Presidium of the Fourth Congress
of the Communist International.*

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(d) THE PROGRAMME

Our movement has reached a stage when the adoption of a definite programme of national liberation as well as of action can no longer be deferred. A programme of national liberation must be formulated in order to state the position of those who do not believe in halfway and the so-called "evolutionary" methods advocated by the compromising

ONE YEAR OF NON-COOPERATION

FROM AHMEDABAD TO GAYA

By
MANABENDRA NATH ROY
and
EVELYN ROY

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liberals. The ambiguous term *swaraj* is open to many definitions, and in fact it has been defined in various ways according to the interests and desires of the different elements participating in our movement. Such a vague objective is certainly not conducive to the strengthening of a movement: on the contrary it makes for weakness. Therefore a militant programme of action has become indispensable in order to mobilise under the banner of the National Congress all the available revolutionary forces. The nation is not a homogeneous whole: it is divided into classes with diverse and often conflicting interests. All these various social classes struggle for their respective interests. They all believe that national liberation will remove their grievances. Therefore the programme of the National Congress, which is not a cohesive political party, but the traditional organ of our national struggle, cannot be according to the interests of one certain class. The National Congress is a coalition of all the forces oppressed by foreign domination; therefore its programme must be a coalition programme.

First of all, we must define what form of national self-government is needed for the welfare of the majority of the nation; then is to be formulated the methods of the struggle which will lead to the realisation of this national self-government.

Programme of National Liberation

It is a well known fact that the domination of foreign imperialism has led to the economic ruin, industrial stagnation, social degeneration and intellectual backwardness of the people of India. The woeful tale of the unlimited exploitation and heartless suppression suffered by the Indian people at the hand of the British rulers has soiled the pages of history. The basis of our national movement is the necessity of the Indian people to free itself from this slavery. So long as the political state power is controlled by the foreign imperialist, no substantial economic and social progress will be permitted to the masses of the population. Therefore, the first and foremost objective of the national struggle is to secure the control of the national government

by the elected representatives of the people. But this cannot be achieved with the sanction and benevolent protection of the imperialist overlords, as the renegade patriots of the Liberal League think, because any measure of self-government or home rule or swaraj under the imperial hegemony of Britain will not amount to anything. Such steps are calculated only to deceive the people. They are camouflage. As the leader of the struggle for national liberation, the Congress must boldly challenge such measures and declare in unmistakable terms that its goal is nothing short of a completely independent national government based on the democratic principle of universal suffrage.

Theory of Equal Partnership a Myth

The theory of "equal partnership in the British commonwealth" is but a gilded version of imperialism. Only the upper classes of our society can find any consolation in it, because the motive behind this theory is to secure the support of the native landowning and capitalist classes by means of economic and political concessions, allowing them a junior partnership in the exploitation of the country. Such concessions will promote the interests, though in a limited way, of the upper classes, leaving the vast majority of the people in political subjugation and economic servitude. The apostles of "peaceful and constitutional" means are nothing but accomplices of the British in keeping the Indian nation in perpetual enslavement. It is needless to point out that England did not conquer India in order to "civilise" us, so to believe that the Indian people will attain the state of complete political autonomy under the guidance of the benign British rule is simply to entertain an illusion. But those believing in cooperation with the British government are too hardheaded businessmen to be under any illusion. If they advocate the policy of "peaceful and constitutional" means, it is because such a policy is more conducive to the interests of their class than a sudden radical change in the political administration of the country.

Our Landlord and Capitalist Class

The landowners are interested in the security of their estates and preservation of their right to suck the blood of the peasantry by rackrenting and innumerable other forms of exploitation. Any government offering them this security will win their loyal support. The nationality of the rulers will make little difference. The moneyed upper classes seek expansion in the industrial and commercial field. Any government providing facilities for this expansion will have their support and cooperation. If the British government will insist on the old policy of obstructing the industrial development of the country, our capitalist classes will militate in the nationalist ranks. But convenience of exploitation, as well as exigencies resulting from the disastrous effects of the world war today demand a change in the method of imperialist economics. Ever increasing popular discontent forces the British ruler to seek an alliance with some powerful native element, which will find it profitable to help maintain a government preserving "law and order". It offers economic concessions and political privileges in consideration for such help. Thus the landowning and capitalist classes find it possible to have their interests protected and aspirations satisfied within the framework of imperialist suzerainty.

Their property rights protected, and the avenues of their economic development open under the British rule, the landowning and capitalist classes have no reason to quarrel with the former. In fact their economic interests demand peaceful conditions, which are enforced under imperial coercion. They are afraid that a sudden change in the political status of the country will disturb the "peace and order" so indispensable for the security of property and prosperity of commerce and industry. A clear programme of national liberation cannot be carried through without risking a revolutionary action of the masses, who may not be so willing to go back to their socio-economic slavery after conquering the political power for the native upper classes. In order to avoid these unwelcome possibilities, the landowning and capitalist classes prefer a peaceful and gradual progress. They find it

wise to take as much as can be got with the least danger to themselves.

This policy of caution and compromise, however, leaves the interests of the Indian people out of consideration. It is calculated to secure and promote the interests of the thin upper strata of the people. Therefore, it goes without saying that the National Congress must declare that the realisation of the programme of the Liberal League, or any other programme fundamentally of a similar nature, does not bring the Indian nation as a whole any nearer to freedom. Because under "equal partnership in the commonwealth" or "dominion self-government" or "home rule within the British empire" the Indian people will still continue to be under British domination, which will function with the aid and connivance of the native capitalist class.

No Change of Heart

Those preaching the doctrine of "change of heart" on the part of the British rulers fail to dissociate themselves clearly from such halfway measures. Such a doctrine admits the possibility of reconciling the interests of the Indian people with those of imperialism, consequently it is a dangerous doctrine, and the Congress must be freed from it. This ambiguity of its position and the vagueness of its objective have contributed to the vacillation and weakness that characterised the activities of the Congress during the last twelve months. A determined fight which is required to conquer national independence for the Indian people is conditional upon a clearly defined programme, and only such a programme will draw the masses of the people into the national struggle as takes into consideration the vital factors affecting the lives of the people.

Therefore, the Indian National Congress declares the following to be its PROGRAMME OF NATIONAL LIBERATION AND RECONSTRUCTION:

- (1) Complete national independence, separated from all imperial connection and free from all foreign supervision.
- (2) Election of the national assembly by universal suffrage.

Our Landlord and Capitalist Class

The landowners are interested in the security of their estates and preservation of their right to suck the blood of the peasantry by rackrenting and innumerable other forms of exploitation. Any government offering them this security will win their loyal support. The nationality of the rulers will make little difference. The moneyed upper classes seek expansion in the industrial and commercial field. Any government providing facilities for this expansion will have their support and cooperation. If the British government will insist on the old policy of obstructing the industrial development of the country, our capitalist classes will militate in the nationalist ranks. But convenience of exploitation, as well as exigencies resulting from the disastrous effects of the world war today demand a change in the method of imperialist economics. Ever increasing popular discontent forces the British ruler to seek an alliance with some powerful native element, which will find it profitable to help maintain a government preserving "law and order". It offers economic concessions and political privileges in consideration for such help. Thus the landowning and capitalist classes find it possible to have their interests protected and aspirations satisfied within the framework of imperialist suzerainty.

Their property rights protected, and the avenues of their economic development open under the British rule, the landowning and capitalist classes have no reason to quarrel with the former. In fact their economic interests demand peaceful conditions, which are enforced under imperial coercion. They are afraid that a sudden change in the political status of the country will disturb the "peace and order" so indispensable for the security of property and prosperity of commerce and industry. A clear programme of national liberation cannot be carried through without risking a revolutionary action of the masses, who may not be so willing to go back to their socio-economic slavery after conquering the political power for the native upper classes. In order to avoid these unwelcome possibilities, the landowning and capitalist classes prefer a peaceful and gradual progress. They find it

wise to take as much as can be got with the least danger to themselves.

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- (2) Election of the national assembly by universal suffrage.

The sovereignty of the people will be vested in the national assembly which will be the supreme authority.

(3) Establishment of the federated republic of India.

Social and Economic Programme

The principles which will guide the economic and social life of the liberated nation are as follows:

(1) Abolition of landlordism. All large estates will be confiscated without any compensation. Ultimate proprietorship of the land will be vested in the national state. Only those actually engaged in agricultural industry will be allowed to hold land. No tax farming will be allowed.

(2) Land rent will be reduced to a fixed minimum with the object to improving the economic condition of the cultivator. State agricultural cooperative banks will be established to provide credit to the peasant and to free him from the clutches of the moneylender and speculating trader.

(3) State aid will be given to introduce modern methods in agriculture. Through the state cooperative banks agricultural machineries will be sold or lent to the cultivator on easy terms.

(4) All indirect taxes will be abolished and a progressive income tax will be imposed upon incomes exceeding 500 rupees a month.

(5) Nationalisation of public utilities. Mines, railways, telegraphs and inland waterways will be owned and operated by the state under the control of workers' committees, not for profit, but for the use and benefit of the nation.

(6) Modern industries will be developed with aid and under the supervision of the state.

(7) Minimum wages in all the industries will be fixed by legislation.

(8) Eight-hour day. Eight hours a day for five and half days a week will be fixed by law as the maximum duration of work for male adults. Special conditions will be laid down for woman and child labour.

(9) Employers will be obliged by law to provide for a certain standard of comfort as regards housing, working conditions, medical aid, etc. for the workers.

- (10) Protective legislation will be passed about old age, sickness and unemployment insurance in all the industries.
- (11) Labour organisations will be given a legal status and the workers' right to strike to enforce their demands will be recognised.

(12) Workers' councils will be formed in all the big industries to defend the rights of labour. These councils will have the protection of the state in exercising their functions.

(13) Profit sharing will be introduced in all big industries.

(14) Free and compulsory education. Education for both boys and girls will be free and compulsory in the primary grades and free as far as the secondary. Technical and vocational schools will be established with state aid.

(15) The state will be separated from all religious creeds, and the freedom of belief and worship will be guaranteed.

(16) Full social, economic and political rights will be enjoyed by the women.

(17) No standing army will be maintained, but the entire people will be armed to defend the national freedom. A national militia will be organised and every citizen will be obliged to undergo a certain period of military training.

How to Reach Our Goal

The aims and aspirations of the great majority of the Indian people are embodied in this programme, the realisation of which will bring progress and prosperity resulting from national freedom within the reach of all the classes. Now the object before us is clear. Everybody knows what he is fighting for. Swaraj is no longer a vague abstraction open to any interpretation, nor is it "a mental state". Swaraj—national independence—which still continues to be the summary of our programme, represents a clear picture of the national life breathing in the healthy atmosphere of freedom.

The goal fixed, we must now find the ways and means for reaching it. It goes without saying that a bitter and protracted struggle separates us from the goal we are striving for. The "civilising" character of British imperialism will be tested by the brutal resistance it will put up against the

they have repeatedly demonstrated their will and readiness to fight. This rebelliousness of the masses is the solid foundation on which the activities of the National Congress should be based. To develop this spontaneous revolt against unbearable conditions, therefore, will be to strengthen the national struggle. With the purpose of developing all the forces oppressed and exploited under the present order and to lead them in the struggle for national liberation, the Indian National Congress adopts the following ACTION PROGRAMME :

- (1) To lead the redemous poor peasantry in their struggle against the excesses of landlordism and high rents. This task will be accomplished by organising militant peasants' unions which will demand. (a) abolition of feudal rights and dues, repeal of the permanent settlement and talukdari system; (b) confiscation of large estates, (c) management of the confiscated estates by councils of the cultivators; (d) reduction of land rent, irrigation tax, road cess, etc; (e) fixed tenures; (f) no ejection; (g) abolition of indirect taxation, (h) low prices; (i) annulment of all the mortgages held by moneylenders etc.
- (2) To back the demands of the peasantry by organising countrywide mass demonstrations with the slogan of "non-payment of rent and taxes".
- (3) To organise mass resistance against high prices, increase of railway fare, postage, salt tax and other indirect taxation.
- (4) To struggle for the recognition of labour unions and the workers' right to strike in order to enforce their demands.
- (5) To secure an eight-hour day, minimum wage and better housing for the industrial workers.
- (6) To back up these demands by mass strikes to be developed into a general strike at every available opportunity.
- (7) To support all strikes politically and financially out of the Congress fund.
- (8) To agitate for the freedom of press, platform and assembly.
- (9) To organise tenants' strikes against high house rents in the cities.

Indian people in its attempt to realise a programme which proposes to raise India to the status of any free civilised nation. The patriotism of the liberals will be measured by the adhesion they give to this programme of ours, a programme which does not injure them but requires of every sincere Indian nationalist the courage and determination to struggle against the foreign ruler, and which aims not at the economic development of and comfortable position for a few, but for freedom, progress and prosperity for all. We know, however, what to expect from both quarters, British imperialism will never "change its heart" and our upper classes will never risk a comfortable present and a promising future assured to them, for real freedom to the nation. Our immediate task, therefore, is to involve in the struggle all those elements whose welfare demands the realisation of our programme.

Analysis of Our Forces

Now, in a fight it is indispensable to make a correct estimate of the available and reliable forces and to mobilise them so as to have their fullest might brought to bear upon the situation. Great masses of our national army are just on the point of awakening. Their understanding is still limited and their vision not far-reaching. The abstract conception of national liberation leaves them indifferent, nor does the picture of a happy and prosperous life far ahead appeal strongly to their imagination. They are wrapped up in more immediate affairs, those affecting their everyday life. In order to lead them step by step in the great struggle we must take up their immediate problems. These however cannot be solved unless there is a radical politico-economic change, but by standing shoulder to shoulder with them in their struggle against immediate grievances, we will help them develop their revolutionary consciousness. We will convince them in actual struggle how their everyday life is bound up with the destiny of the entire nation.

It is a known fact that intensified economic exploitation has at last exhausted the patience of the Indian masses and shaken their traditional resignation. During the last years

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(8) To agitate for the freedom of press, platform and assembly.

(9) To organise tenants' strikes against high house rents in the cities.

(10) To build up a countrywide organisation of national volunteers.

(11) To organise strikes of the clerks and employees in the government and commercial offices for higher salaries.

(12) To enter the councils with the object of wrecking them.

(13) To organise mass demonstrations for the release of political prisoners.

The Final Step

The realisation of this programme of action, every clause of which corresponds to the immediate interests of one or another section of the people, will increase the fighting capacity of the nation as a whole. The national army will be drilled, so to say, ready for action. Every class will find the Congress striving for its welfare. In face of a gigantic mass movement thus organised and involving larger and larger sections of the population, the authority of the government will break down. Noncooperation of the productive elements of society will paralyse the life of the country, thus dealing a death-blow to the government. Inauguration of the campaign of nationwide civil disobedience will precipitate the final stage of our struggle to be crowned inevitably by the conquest of an independent national existence, in which the people of India will have the opportunity of progressing in social, economic and intellectual realms, in accordance with the principles contained in our programme of national reconstruction.

December 1922

(One Year of Noncooperation, Chapter X)

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(e) SINGARAVELU'S SPEECH IN SUPPORT OF LABOUR RESOLUTION

President, comrades in this hall, fellow workers, peasants of Hindustan, ryots and tillers of the soil of Hindustan, I have come before you today to speak on your behalf as a fellow worker. I have come here as a representative of the great world interest—represented by that great order of the

world communists—and I have come to give you the great message which communism offers to the world workers. I come before you today to offer you the greetings of the workers of the world—of the communists in America, of the communists of Soviet Russia, of the communists of Germany and other world communists—who are interested in securing you your liberty, your home, your food and your clothing.

Comrades, you all know that our Congress is fighting for our rights, the right to lead a free life in our country and these rights ought to be secured for us all. We do not want the accumulation of power in a few or fewer hands. We want power enough to enable us to be fed properly, to be clothed properly and to be housed properly. These are the essentials we want. Our Congress must pledge itself to this. The world communists have pledged themselves to assist the Congress in securing these rights to you. Comrades, the communists all over the world have the common faith in the justness of your cause and in the justness of your demand. Therefore you have to understand that they are here in spirit for helping you to obtain those rights and attain swaraj. Let us welcome them.

Comrades, first and foremost we have one thing to do—that is, we have to attain swaraj and the method which we, as followers of Mahatma Gandhi, can use in attaining swaraj is nonviolent noncooperation. I have the greatest faith in that method. That method has been disputed by our fellow communists abroad. I need not tell you their names. They have been disputing with me as to the efficacy of that method. I told them that we have adopted this method as a practical necessity and that I believed in that method. Therefore they differ from us fundamentally. But we the communists in India differ from our fellow communists abroad in this fundamental method. We, therefore, send them our message that not only we believe in non-violent noncooperation but that we are going to use non-violent noncooperation against the British domination here. The world workers know it and we ask them also to understand it. I appeal to you, therefore, comrades, that we

Congressmen should take greater interest in the welfare of labour.

I have one more idea to place before you, that is, that the workers in India should be made a part of our Congress organisation. Because we have failed to do that, we had the Bardoli resolution. I make bold to say that Bardoli was a disaster, because we have failed to take up the workers of India in the cause of swaraj. We have failed at Bardoli and we have miserably suffered for our errors and mistakes. I therefore want the Congress to lead the nation under non-violent noncooperation so far as to secure national strikes. I tell you, without resorting to national strikes, I do not think we shall be able to swerve by a hair's breadth the British domination in India. I therefore request you (not only) to deal with Indian Trade Union Congress but to go direct to the workers and organise labour unions in the country as part of our Congress institution.

One word more, comrades and workers, you know not your own strength, you know not your power. Once you realise yourselves, that ignorance that blinds your eyes today will vanish and the world will be yours. In the land of Ukraine, in the far off Russia, there is a tradition of a huge giant called the Vee. But his eyelids were so long that they touched the ground. He could not see anything lying beyond him. His pendent eyelids are now being slowly lifted. In one place at least his eyelids have been completely lifted. He has now begun to see beyond him. He now sees beyond the frontiers, beyond the hills, beyond the mountains, beyond the seas and beyond the oceans. Through the workers of Russia, the workers of India, of Asia, of Europe and America and of Australia have become one in comradeship. They have all pledged themselves to work for that comradeship. We communists believe in the brotherhood of the human race. The workers of India also will help in effecting such a unity of the human race. Therefore hearken, you bourgeoisie, hearken to me, know that the workers of India are awakened. Know that like their comrades abroad they now see beyond the hills, beyond the seas and oceans, encompassing all the world.

workers in real comradeship. You cannot today neglect them. They have now realised their strength.

Today the Indian labour can be compared to the Cinderella of the East. To her has been assigned the little things of the world. To her has been assigned all the famines, all the pestilences, all the diseases and all the miseries of the world. To her has been assigned all the cares and anxieties of the world. Beware you rich men, beware you big men, remember all our sorrows and all our toils. While labour has given you all the good things of the world, you have kept her in the background. While all the time ministering to your wants you have been neglecting her. By her skill, devotion and intelligence, you are enjoying all the luxuries of the world. But the denouement is fast approaching, while the haughty brothers, the bourgeoisie, will sink into neglected Cinderella. The labour of India, proclaimed as highest alike in worth and beauty, will reign supreme. Oh bourgeoisie, remember that Indian labour has awakened. She is wide awake and is coming steadily and surely to her rights to save the world. I now heartily support this resolution.

(Labour Kishan Gazette, Vol. I, No. 4, 31 January 1924.)

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(F) COMMUNIST AT GAYA

(We have received the following description of the appearance in the Gaya congress of M. Singaravelu Chettiar, the first Indian communist to take part in the deliberations of the nationalist movement. Extracts from his manifesto to the Indian National Congress have already been printed in our previous issues. — Editor, Vanguard.)

Mr Singaravelu was a stranger to the Congress, this being the first annual session he had attended since 1886. But his name was well known as an active worker in the non-cooperation campaign of the past three years. Some 400 copies of his war manifesto were distributed among the members of the All-India Congress Committee, and it shook the whole assembly with a zeal and fervour that made him at once their pet. Affectionate congratulations poured upon him from every side. When in the full sitting of the Congress the old man rose to make his maiden

speech and began by addressing the assembled delegates as "comrades", loud bursts of applause greeted him and, from that moment until he left Gaya, he was addressed as comrade by thousands of Congressmen, and soon came to be known as the Comrade of the House. In recommending him to the subcommittees for labour, members stood up and shouted that "Newbold" of the House should be made a member. One must take such compliments *cum grano salo* knowing how shallow are such outbursts of popular enthusiasm, and Mr Singaravelu went quietly on with his business. His appearance, however, received by the motley assembly at Gaya will prove to be an historic episode, and those who jeered would have done better to marvel at the courage which led a grey-beard of over sixty to openly proclaim himself a communist when younger spirits quailed in terror at the prospect of government prosecution and ostracism from the ranks of "respectable" nationalism.

(*The Vanguard of Indian Independence*, Vol. III, No. 2, 1 March 1923)

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(g) M. N. ROY'S LETTER TO S. A. DANGE

Berlin, December 12.
(1922)

Dear Mr. Dange,

Back again here after 7 weeks. The congress is over. The absence of anybody straight from India was lamented. I hope my last letter written from M. has reached you. The proposed conference has been decided upon. It is our immediate task. The preparations must be made at once. Delegates should reach here not later than the end of January. Detailed instructions and other details will reach you as soon as possible, in a different way, which I hope, will be less unfortunate than the rest. It is regretted to tell you that your presence is urgently needed. Besides you are authorised to select one or two more from the groups likely to fall in line with our programme of a mass party (not class). Hope one from the trade union (not the Congress) will be very welcome. Enclosed is a copy of a letter which originally has been sent to the addressee but I am afraid it -

has not reached in time, for the delay in the mail. I suppose the letter can be published in the *Socialist*. So also there are other articles enclosed. More later. With greetings

M.R.

(Kanpur Conspiracy Case, Exhibit No. 7.)

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(h) M. N. ROY'S LETTER TO S. A. DANGE

Berlin, December 19, 1922

My dear Comrade Dange,

It is long since we have heard anything from you. I wrote you in a hurry after coming back from Moscow. It is expected that you have already taken some steps about the conference here. Nanda Lal (this is admittedly a pseudonym for Charles Ashleigh) told you extensively about the necessity of such a conference and you yourself must be of the same view. We expected to hear from you about the results of the attempts you promised Nanda Lal to make in this respect...

The Communist International thinks that the time has come for the organisation of our party in India. We expected to begin the work taking the delegation to the Fourth Congress as the basis. Therefore we were very very anxious to have such a delegation come; and we went to the extent of sending a special messenger (Ashleigh, apparently) for the purpose, but for various difficulties none of you could come to the congress. So it was decided that we should have a conference here as early as possible. In this conference should be called representatives from all the groups in agreement with our programme and feeling the need for a new start in the movement. There are already several such groups in existence in India, and we are in touch with them. This conference will be held under the auspices of the Comintern whose representatives will be present in it, besides representatives from the British and

* This letter—Ex 7—was intercepted and kept by the CID.

اخبار انقلاب

ہنگام کی نجات جمہور کے افلاس میں
مزدور جماعت کو حقوق سوانح کی جہلیں میں
دور حاضرہ کی گونا گوں کشمکشیں

ان سوانح کا حل رکھنا ہے تو اخبار انقلاب ہمیشہ

انقلاب عوام الناس کا اخبار ہے پیشین گوئی اور براہ راست
کامیابیوں کا پیشہ مزدوروں کا سوانح جمہور کا سوانح ہے جس کے
لئے ہمیشہ ہر شعبہ

شیراز چند سالہ قید میں ہے جس کے بارے میں ہرگز
بیکر اخبار انقلاب کیلئے روڈ لا اور مسئلہ ہے

other principal continental parties.* The questions of the programme and organisation of a revolutionary party of the working class will be discussed.

We must have the conference as soon as possible in order that the situation created by the break-up of the deadlock in the Congress can be utilised. We have to work both in legal and illegal ways. A revolutionary mass party has to be organised as a part of the Congress, but this party must be under the control and direction of our own party (communist party) which cannot but be illegal. Therefore, our party must be built on a very firm foundation. The (these?) are the principal groups to be called in the conference: (1) the one led by you; (2) that represented by Singaravelu Chettiar of Madras; (3) the group publishing the daily paper *Inqilab* in Lahore (Chamberlain Road); (4) some from them whose address Nanda Lal gave you; and (5) some from the trade unions...

We must draw towards us the people actually working in the unions thus cutting under the politicians controlling the imperfect machine of the Trade Union Congress...

I must tell you that the *Inqilab* is our organ and editor, Shams-ud-Din Hasan (of Ex 14), works with Mohammed Siddiqi who is a member of our party. He works under the direction of our centre in Kabul...

But according to the latest reports, our comrades are expelled from Afghanistan. They are coming back to Russia. Consequently, it is expected that you, Siddiqi and Singaravelu will work in conjunction for arranging the delegation, with you as the centre. All expenses etc. will be sent to you on your sending a reliable address. You can communicate to either of the two addresses you have, but by next post I hope to send you another one which can be used for cables. Singaravelu's address is 22, South Beach, Triplicane, Madras. Siddiqi's is C/o Shams-ud-Din Hasan, Ed. *Inqilab*, Chamberlain Rd., Lahore. I have written to them by the same post, telling them the same things as you and instruct-

* This is first page of Ex 20; it now is proved to have been typed by the same machine as Ex 23, which latter Dange admits he received.

ing them to communicate with you. Hoping to hear from you by return mail, with best wishes and greetings.

(Kanpur Conspiracy Case, Exhibit No. 20)

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(i) SOCIAL EMANCIPATION

The real and lasting freedom of a people demands their complete and unconditional social emancipation. From time immemorial, the working class has lived in a state of social slavery. Why is this so? Why is the class which produces everything condemned to slavery? Is it because it is by nature inferior to the other classes? Is there any reason to believe that those who maintain society by their toil are in any way inferior to those who live in idle luxury? No, we cannot believe that some have been specially ordained to live in comfort and happiness, while the great majority exist in want and misery. Two hundred workers build a house. In this house, a few people live comfortably. Who decides that these few, and not the many whose labour has built the house, shall live in it? *The law of private property decides.* The people who have paid for the house are said to *own* it, though they have done nothing to bring it into existence. They have not laid one brick; they have not moved a piece of stone; they have not carried one pitcher of water. Yet we are told: "The owners have paid the workers wages for their labour." Where did the owners get this money with which they paid wages to the workers? They did not coin it, neither did it drop from heaven. This money with which the workers are paid their wages does not belong to the owners, because it has been gained by exploitation, by robbing other workers of the fruits of their labour. The money has been gained from profits made on land or industry or trade and all profits, as we have seen, are made from the unpaid labour of the working class. Thus the wealth of the rich does not rightfully belong to them, but to those who have worked to produce it.

Just so long as everything that is produced by the labour of the many remains the property of the few, just so long will the working class continue to be the slave of the capi-

WHAT DO WE WANT?

By

MANABENDRA NATH ROY

1922

EDITION DE LA LIBRAIRIE J. S. TARGET
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Cover page of What Do We Want?

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talist class, of those who own private property. Until this system based upon private ownership, which leads to the exploitation of human labour, is changed, there cannot be real freedom. Since everything of value is created by human labour, these should belong to all those who work. And in order to earn the right to live in human society, *productive labour should be made compulsory to all.*

Some argue thus: "Well, the people of the upper classes are more educated and more intelligent than the workers, that is why they are able to earn more money." This is a foolish argument. If the children of the workers and peasants were sent to the same schools and colleges as the children of the rich, would they be any less educated than the latter? Of course not. It is not lack of *ability*, but lack of *opportunity*, that creates a difference in education and culture. It is not natural inferiority but *economic disability* that creates such a wide gulf between the rich privileged classes and the poor and downtrodden masses. The wages they receive are not sufficient to feed their children; how then can they send them to school, especially in a country where education is neither free nor compulsory? No, it is not natural inferiority, they are maintained in poverty so that the few may live in luxury.

Against this system, we must rebel. We declare war on it, and we demand its overthrow. This is what we want. National freedom, a small increase in wages, some slight improvements in our miserable way of living will not, after all, change our life very much for the better. The cost of living will keep step with the increase in wages. As long as capitalism exists, so long as society is based upon private ownership, the working class will continue to be exploited by the possessing class. *We demand the liberation of the industrious classes. We are struggling for that state of society in which everyone shall work, and each will enjoy the full fruits of his labour.* We fight for national independence because we know that it is the first step forward towards our ultimate goal. What we really strive for, what we really want, is for the Indian nation to become a free community of those who labour productively for the good

of society. In such a community the idle rich can have no place. It is the task of the workers to establish such a society. We propose to educate, organise and lead the working class in this struggle for social emancipation, which will be hard and prolonged. The goal cannot be reached at once, we must progress by stages. In order to free the toiling masses from social slavery, we have to fight every inch of the way. The privileged class is seated very firmly in the saddle. It cannot be overthrown at once. When the foreign ruler is driven out, our native master class will take its place. Age-long economic enslavement has obstructed our moral and intellectual progress. For this reason, in spite of the unbearable misery in which the majority of us live, many are still resigned to their lot. They believe fate has ordained them to be poor and to suffer. This ignorance and passivity of the masses has always been fomented by the upper classes and maintained by every means within their power, chief among which has been the preaching of religions that teach resignation to our earthly lot as to the will of god. The first thing we have to fight and overcome is this spirit of resignation and submission engendered by superstition and ignorance. This task is aided by objective economic forces, which have shaken the traditional passivity of the Indian masses and have set them on the war path. It is our task to direct this awakening in the channels that will lead to real freedom.

We must educate the ignorant workers. We must show them how they are robbed and exploited. Many do not know what slaves they are; they think it a virtue to be poor. We must teach them that those who preach the virtues of poverty are not true spiritual guides, but the protectors of the interests of the master class. The masses must be freed from their moral slavery in order to realise fully the misery of their material life. Throughout the ages they have been taught that they will be rewarded in the after life if they suffer patiently in this. This is all very well to say, but we know that the hope of future bliss does not lessen the sufferings of our everyday life, which is the only actuality we know of. No, we must fight to win freedom in

this life, to improve our present economic condition in order to release other and higher faculties, born of leisure and enjoyment. We must teach the masses that the philosophy of poverty is conducive to the interests of the idle rich, because it keeps the people docile and harmless. This spirit of docility and resignation does not make for freedom; so long as the Indian people remain victims of this pernicious doctrine, even the political liberation of our country cannot be realised.

Therefore we want to organise the workers in their own class organisations with the object of fighting for the interests of their class. If they do not wish to be deceived and betrayed, let them not trust to the leadership of the upper classes, whose interests are fundamentally opposed to their own. The exploited masses can be educated and organised effectively only in the school of revolutionary mass action.

Revolutionary Mass Action

The working class must be organised first of all to defend its own economic interests. We have seen how the interests of the entire people in any country cannot be the same, because they are divided into two antagonistic classes, namely the propertied and the propertyless, the owner and the producer, the employer and the employee, the capitalist and the worker. The former thrives on the exploitation of the latter; therefore, the interest of the one cannot be the interest of the other. Both may unite temporarily to fight together against a common enemy, but this union can never be permanent, because each is struggling for a different goal—neither is actuated by the same motives; *each wants liberty, but the liberty of their respective class.*

The Indian people as a whole are exploited by the foreign ruler, and therefore the British government is their common enemy irrespective of class distinction. Rich and poor, capitalist and worker, bourgeoisie and proletariat, are fighting and must continue to fight in a united front against the foreign domination. This fight is called the struggle for

that the people are divided into two antagonistic classes, with mutually opposing interests.

The Indian workers and peasants will join the struggle against foreign rule, impelled by the interests of their class, because it exploits them, keeps them economically backward and obstructs their social progress. Our fight is of a different nature from that of the rich zamindars, capitalists and intellectuals. We are fighting for the interests of the common people and our goal must be always clear before us. We want to end foreign exploitation of the Indian masses in order to better their economic condition. This is our immediate goal. Our ultimate goal is the end of all exploitation. We want to break the age-long social slavery of all those who live by labour, who create all wealth.

How to achieve this ultimate goal? How to proceed? A hard struggle lies before us. Our fight will be a long one. Intelligent leadership is necessary, but we must ultimately learn to depend on the irresistible strength of mass action, impelled ever forward by relentless economic forces, which in the end always triumph. *Our task is to develop in the minds of the masses this consciousness of their own power, to awaken their interest and develop their indomitable will to conquer freedom. They will do the rest.*

By agitation, we can educate the workers to understand the interests of their class. We can teach them how to organise themselves for concerted action on the economic and political field. We can help to root out of them that spirit of resignation, of submission to fate, which robs them of all initiative and desire to improve their material existence by active struggle. We must teach them their right to live as human beings, and help them to formulate the demands which must be backed up by determined mass action, which under perfect organisation and leadership can be developed into a countrywide general strike.

Our task will be aided by external forces, ever at work. Starvation and age-long suffering have already shaken the traditional resignation of the Indian working class. They are in a rebellious mood, ready to fight. They demand a change in their condition but because of their centuries of

national freedom. The Indian people are fighting for their political independence, for the right to rule themselves. The Indian propertied class wants to be free of foreign rule because, under it, freedom of development of and the unrestricted right of exploitation is denied to this class. If all the wealth produced by the workers and peasants of India remained in the hands of the rich native capitalists, the British would cease to rule India, because there would be no profit in their rule. As long as a foreign government rules the country, the native capitalist class must lose a portion of the proceeds of exploitation, which are appropriated by the foreign ruler and which the native capitalists consider their legitimate due. Such being the case, the native upper classes must fight the foreign exploiter. They say they are struggling against foreign domination to make the country free, but what they are really fighting for is their own interest. They are fighting for the freedom to exploit the Indian workers and peasants and the natural resources of the country, in order to secure this they must become the rulers of India. This is the national freedom they are striving for; this is what they want.

But is this what we want? Will the condition of the toiling masses, who constitute the great majority of the Indian people, be any better off after gaining such national freedom? No, surely not. The Indian workers and peasants are poor, they are starving, they die by thousands from famine and pestilence, because the exploitation of the propertied classes deprives them of the fruit of their labour. The British, being the rulers of the nation, are able to rob the people more than the native capitalists do. Therefore we must fight to overthrow them. But the overthrow of British rule will not be enough to free the entire people from economic exploitation and social slavery. *The fundamental motive of our struggle is to abolish the source of human exploitation, which lies in the system of private property, of production for profit, in a word, capitalism.* Since the entire Indian people are exploited by a foreign power, the entire people must rebel against it, must unite their forces to fight against and overthrow it. But this does not alter the fact

that the people are divided into two antagonistic classes, with mutually opposing interests.

The Indian workers and peasants will join the struggle against foreign rule, impelled by the interests of their class, because it exploits them, keeps them economically backward and obstructs their social progress. Our fight is of a different nature from that of the rich zamindars, capitalists and intellectuals. We are fighting for the interests of the common people and our goal must be always clear before us. We want to end foreign exploitation of the Indian masses in order to better their economic condition. This is our immediate goal. Our ultimate goal is the end of all exploitation. We want to break the age-long social slavery of all those who live by labour, who create all wealth.

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moral and material slavery, the majority of them do not know exactly what to fight for. It is our task to infuse consciousness in these toiling masses—to develop the spontaneous awakening and intensify their rebellious spirit of leading their struggle for the redress of their immediate grievances. *Our object should be to create discontent everywhere against the present system of exploitation, and to intensify it wherever it exists.* Thus will the ideal of swaraj be brought within the understanding of the workers and peasants of India. Let us lead them forward under the slogan: “*Down with foreign rule*”; “*Down with all exploitation*”; “*Land to the peasant and bread to the worker*”

(*What Do We Want?*, Part III, pp. 37-43.)

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Abdul Rab, Moulavi (Peshawari)—Inspired by Pan-Islamic patriotic sentiments, went to Turkey when the first world war broke out. After the war he came to Kabul and in 1918 crossed into the Soviet Russia together with M. P. B. T. Acharya. Together they organised Indian Revolutionary Association in Soviet Central Asia. Rab was a popular orator and his speeches were reported in local press in Tashkent. He was in the delegation led

by Mahendra Pratap which met Lenin in 1919. Met Lenin thereafter also and supplied him with a list of books on India at his request. Did not join CPI formed in Tashkent. Later he shifted back to Constantinople where he lived till his death.—16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 30, 39, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 80, 93, 110, 115, 132, 218, 220, 229, 240, 253, 254

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 Ashleigh, Charles—A British communist who began his life as a railway clerk in Buenos Aires—later in USA in touch with militant working class movement. Arrested in a strike in 1918 with 100 others and sentenced to 10 years but later released and deported from USA in February 1922 to UK. later went to Berlin. Sent on behalf of the Comintern to contact Indian communists to send delegation to the 4th Congress of CI. Arrived in Bombay by mail-boat on 19 September 1922. Detained on board, luggage searched, allowed to land—lodged in a hotel—kept under surveillance—asked to return by the next mail-boat as his passport was cancelled by wire by the British government in London. He left India on 23 September. During these 4 days he evaded the police vigilance and managed to meet S. A. Dange and to communicate the message to him. (Ref. Home Department Pol., File No 22 of 1923, Part IV, section 1-8).—520, 521, 522, 523, 526, 593
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 Dutt, Pramathnath alias Daud Ali—Came over from USA in the period of the first world war to assist in revolutionary work under the Berlin Committee. Together with other Indian revolutionaries—M. P. B. T. Acharya, B. N. Dasgupta, P. Khankhoje—carried on pro-

paganda among Indian soldiers taken as war-prisoners in Constantinople. Cooperated with these revolutionaries to form a liberation army which was to march through Persia to India's north-west frontier. While in Persia taken prisoner by the British, escaped imprisonment and crossed into Soviet Russia in 1921. Was in the Indian delegation of revolutionaries which negotiated with Soviet leaders in 1921. Remained in Soviet Russia, worked in the Oriental Institute of Leningrad University till his death.—49, 253, 254

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Dutta, Dr Bhupendranath (1880-1961)—Brother of Swami Vivekananda. Associated with Anushilan Samiti's youth wing, later associated with Yugantar group, edited *Yugantar* for some time. Arrested for sedition, left for Europe after release. In Germany in 1914 associated with V. Chattopadhyaya in the Berlin Committee. Turned to socialism after the October Revolution, was in the delegation of Indian revolutionaries which negotiated with Soviet leaders in 1921, after returning to Berlin in the early twenties active with Chattopadhyaya in "Indian News and Information Bureau". Returned to India in 1925, associated with youth and peasants' movements in the late twenties, author of *Aprakashita Rajnaitik Itihas*,

Dialectics of Land Economics of India and many other works on anthropology and politics.—6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 39, 80, 81, 86, 94, 95, 114, 115, 121, 122, 147, 148, 217, 218, 220, 224, 224n, 228, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 255n, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 340, 361, 426, 528

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Ferozuddin Mansoor—One of the Muhajirs of the batch of 80. Was in the aviation class in Tashkent military school, also in the University for the Toilers of the East. Left Tashkent for India via Pamirs in 1922. Sentenced to one year's RI in Peshawar Conspiracy Case. After release, an active communist organiser and journalist, worked in Naujawan Bharat Sabha, wrote for *Mehnatkash* and later for *Kirti* (Urdu). Leading member of CPI in the Punjab in forties. In Pakistan after independence, became the first secretary of CP in West Pakistan.—1, 22, 37, 41, 55, 60, 93, 215, 226, 229, 248, 505

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Ghaus (Gauhar or Gaur) Rahman—Left India during the Hijrat in 1920 spring, crossed over into Soviet Russia with the batch of 80 from Afghanistan, was in the aviation class in Tashkent military school, also in the University for the Toilers of the East in Moscow (1921-22) where he joined the CPI, was sentenced to two years' RI in the Peshawar Conspiracy Case (1923).

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Gill, Dalip Singh—Son of a peasant of Patiala. Was in America during the first world war, made acquaintance with Karl Liebknecht in prison in Germany. The latter set him free after the November 1918 revolution in Germany. Went to Russia beginning of 1919. Member of the delegation which met Lenin in May 1919. Active in Berlin association of Indian revolutionaries in 1922. —16, 18, 110

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HABIB AHMED (Naseem)—Went with the batch of 80 to Tashkent, was in the infantry class in the military school there, also in the Eastern People's University. Came to India via Pamirs, sentenced to one years' RI in Peshawar Conspiracy Case. Later worked for some time for the Communist

- Party in Delhi. In 1928 beginning travelled secretly together with Shaukat Usmani, Mohammad Shafiq and Masood Ali Shah to Moscow probably attended the Congress of the Young Communist International held in Moscow at the time of the Sixth Congress of the CI (Aug.-Sept. 1928). Usmani in his unpublished autobiography says, he remained in the USSR, doing some teaching job. Rafiq, his brother who was in the RIN Revolt (1946) kept in touch with Habib till 1949.—55, 60, 222, 226, 229, 248
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- Hardayal (1884-1939)—One of the founders of the Ghadar Party in California in the period of the first world war. Associated with the Berlin Committee, author of several pamphlets of the Ghadar Party, active on behalf of the Berlin Committee in Switzerland, Kabul and Stockholm(?). In the early twenties severed his connections with the Indian revolutionaries and published a statement and a pamphlet declaring his allegiance to the British empire.—5, 11, 257, 257n
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- Kar, Surendranath—Went to USA in 1910, was arrested in San Francisco Conspiracy Case in 1917, sentenced to 2 years (May 1918). After release worked for the Ghadar Party after its reorganisation in 1920-21 with Santokh Singh as general secretary. Dr Bhupendranath Dutta says he was called to Berlin in 1921; despite his ill health, Kar joined the communist group formed by Dr Dutta (ARI, p. 302-3). Later we find him co-operating with M. N. Roy with

- whom he signed "Manifesto to the All India Congress Committee" dated 15 July 1922. He died in Berlin in 1923 (ARI, p. 166).—429, 479
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- Kaye, C—Director General of the Intelligence Bureau in British India in the early twenties. Author of the confidential report of the British government in India, *Communism in India* (1926).—26, 69, 81, 116, 218, 219, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 250, 251, 253, 258, 310n, 358, 426, 427, 429n, 506, 507, 508, 509, 521, 522, 524, 528
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- Khankhoje, Dr Pandurang—In 1900 in his teens took part in a secret youth organisation making weapons and bombs. Advised by Lokamanya Tilak went abroad to USA, studied at California University in Berkley and then at the Military Academy, later studied in Oregon Agricultural College. Joined Ghadar Party in California, sent by them when the first world war broke out to Constantinople. Working under instructions of Berlin Committee, together with Acharya, B. N. Dasgupta and Daud Ali Dutta made propaganda among Indian soldiers taken war prisoners there and formed an Indian revolutionary army. This was to march through Persia to India's frontier and there link up with Baluchi tribes and organise actions against the British forces in Northern India. These operations were not successful. He remained in Persia till 1920. Travelling via Turkey and Berlin reached Moscow in the beginning of 1921, was in the delegation of Indian revolutionaries who came to Soviet Russia in 1921 summer, to negotiate with Soviet leaders, along with V. Chattopadhyaya and Luhani was co-signatory of the theses sent by them jointly to Lenin regarding situation in India. Lenin replied to them: "I read your theses with great interest. But why new theses?" Reported to have attended the Third Congress of the Comintern (22 June—12 July 1921), met Lenin and had meetings with Chicherin and Trotsky, after 1922 was associated with 'Indian News and Information Bureau' led by V.

- Chattopadhyaya. In the late twenties left for Mexico where he remained till independence. After returning to India was a minister for agriculture in Madhya Pradesh for a short time, later led a retired life and died on 22 January 1967 in Nagpur.—32, 49, 80, 81, 86, 87, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259
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- Krishnavarma, Shyamji—Originally from Saurashtra (Gujarat). Ardent supporter of Lokamanya Tilak and of complete independence. Formed the first group of Indian revolutionaries abroad in England in cooperation with Madam Cama, Rana and V. D. Savarkar and others, founded Indian Home Rule Society in England, edited *Indian Sociologist*, the English monthly from Geneva (1905), shifted to Paris and later to Switzerland where he remained till his death in 1930.—5, 6, 79, 114
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- Luhani, Ghulam Ambia Khan—Originally from East Bengal. For studies was in England in the period of first world war, imbibed revolutionary and socialist ideas. In 1920 came

- over to Berlin and joined with V. Chattopadhyaya, was in the delegation of Indian revolutionaries which negotiated with Soviet state and party leaders regarding help to India's independence struggle (1921), remained in Soviet Russia co-operating with Roy (1922-28), in autumn 1928 was one of the Indian delegation at the Sixth Congress of the CI. Later remained in Soviet Russia, wrote several articles in *Inprecor* on Indian struggle.—28, 80, 81, 86, 87, 241n, 253, 254, 255, 256
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- Mir Abdul Asajid—Went with the Muhajirs in the batch of 80, was in Tashkent school and Eastern People's University. Came back via Pamirs, sentenced in Peshawar Conspiracy Case for one year RI. After release was active in workers' and peasants' movement in the Punjab, started and edited *Mehnatkash*, a militant workers' weekly. Later convicted in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. Was an activist of the CPI, also one of the founders of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha in 1926. Went to Pakistan after independence.—1, 21, 37, 41, 55, 60, 93, 215, 229, 248
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- Mohammad Akbar Khan Qureshi (Mohammad Akbar) — Led the batch of 80 Muhajirs to Tashkent, was in aviation class in Tashkent military school. After returning secretly via Kabul and Charkand was arrested in Lahore on 25 September 1921, sentenced to three years' RI in Peshawar Conspiracy Case (on 31.5.1922) and one year RI in the 2nd Peshawar Conspiracy Case (26.4.1923). After his release in the thirties was active in the national libera-

- tion movement, later joined the Forward Bloc and was responsible for planning and arranging Subhas Chandra Bose's escape from India in 1941. Went to Pakistan after independence, wrote articles about his reminiscences in Pakistan press in 1970.—22 41, 43, 48n, 51, 55, 248
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- OSEIDULLAH SINDHI (Moulana)—took the famous batch of 15 of earliest Muhajirs to Kabul from Lahore in February 1915. Was Home Minister in the provisional government of M. Pratap, organised a branch of All India Congress Committee in Kabul. Went to Soviet Union in 1922 when expelled by Amir Amanullah of Afghanistan. In the mid- and late-twenties was residing in Constantinople, where produced a draft constitution of the Republic of India (1926), a copy of which is in the Dimitrov Museum in

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- Pillai, Champakraman — President, International Pro-India Committee in Zurich. Associated with the Berlin Committee, later a member of the Pan-German Nationalist Party after the first world war.—17, 147, 257
- Pingle, Vishnu Hari—Active worker in the Ghadar Party in America, came in contact with Jatin Mukherji on his return from there in 1914, took part in the abortive attempts by Ghadar Party at a revolution in 1914. Arrested at Meerut in 1915, sentenced to death in the First Lahore Conspiracy Case and executed in 1915.—5, 141
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- Pratap, Mahendra (B. 1 December 1886)—Joined the Indian National Congress in 1912. Left India in 1914, was in Berlin Committee along with Chattopadhyaya and also in the Indo-German Mission. Formed provisional government of India in Kabul in 1915 and was its president. Early 1919 went to Soviet Russia, met Lenin at the head of a delegation. Returned to India after independence, was a member of parliament. Lives a retired but active life in Dehra Dun.—5, 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 25, 30, 39, 53, 58, 59, 63, 65, 93, 110, 112, 114, 115, 116, 118, 132, 215, 218, 220, 221, 228, 240, 254
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- Rafiq Ahmed—A resident of Bhopal and one of the Muhajirs in the batch of 80 along with Shaukat Usmani, took part in the defence of Kirkee, was in the infantry class in the Tashkent military school, also in the University for the Toilers of the East in Moscow. Came to India via Pamirs, sentenced to one year RI in the Peshawar Conspiracy Case. His reminiscences as a Muhajir are in an interview with Muzaffar Ahmad in latter's *Early Years of the Formation of the CPI* and another detailed ver-

sion in an unpublished manuscript of 1967. Was awarded a gold medal and invited for a tour in the USSR by the Soviet government in 1967 in connection with the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution.—21, 36, 37, 39, 30, 41, 42, 43, 44, 44n, 51, 52, 54, 55, 59, 60, 221, 222, 223, 228, 229, 239, 240, 242, 249, 250

Rahmat Ali Khan (Zakaria)—

One of the earliest 15 Muhajirs to leave India for Afghanistan in February 1915. One of the ministers of the provisional government of India in Kabul. Addressed the Third Congress of the Turkestan Communist Party on 9 June 1919 and declared himself communist much earlier. Worked in Eastern Section of the CI in December 1923, later on settled in France and studied there. Was in Pakistan after independence.—1, 17, 49, 53, 54, 55, 60, 132, 229

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Roy, Evelyn—Wife of M. N.

Roy. Attended the meeting of the foundation of the CP in Tashkent in October 1920, active at the time of the Second Congress of the CI, associated with the paper *Vanguard* started by M. N. Roy, was also active in Henri Barbusse's Comité Pro-Hindu. Wrote a number of articles in the *International Press Correspondence* in the name of Santi Devi. Left political work in the late twenties and returned to USA.—30, 46, 57, 225, 231, 252, 253, 338, 412, 417, 424, 427, 527

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Satyabhakta—Real name was Chakanlal. Edited *Prantik* from Nagpur and published some socialist pamphlets, later shifted to Kanpur. In 1924, after the Kanpur Conspiracy Case was launched against Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad and two others, was helpful in their defence work in Kanpur together with K. N. Joglekar. After the judgment in the Kanpur Case, conceived the idea of organising the Communist Party on legal and national basis. Established a socialist bookshop in Kanpur, set up an "Indian Communist Party", in 1925 published a pamphlet *Mehnat Peshaoon ko Sandesh*, later published a number of leaflets in English and Hindi, e.g. "The Indian Communist Party", "Future Programme of the Indian Communist Party" and "The First Indian Communist Conference" in which expounded his ideas. Took the initiative to convene

the First All-India Communist Conference, in cooperation with Hasrat Mohani as the chairman of reception committee, invited Shapurji Saklatvala to preside, and at the conference however his ideas were not acceptable to the majority of delegates from genuine communist groups from all over India and left the same together with his followers. Was elected to the CEC of the party at the conference in his absence, later in 1926 sent in his resignation and severed his connections with the party. At present lives a retired life in Mathura-Vrindaban.—225

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Shaukat Usmani—Left India during Hijrat movement in 1920, went to Tashkent with the batch of 80 Muhajirs, fought for the defence of Kirkee alongside Red Army against the counter-revolutionaries, was in

the Tashkent military school and the Eastern People's University of Moscow, and attended the Sixth Congress of the C.I. Convicted in Kanpur Conspiracy Case together with S. A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmad and Nalini Gupta for 4 years. After the release published *Peshawar to Moscow, 1927*, later edited *Payam-i-Mazdur from Bombay till his arrest in Meerut Conspiracy Case in which was sentenced to 7 years, later reduced to 3 years*. Towards the end of the case separated himself from the party, after release was working with the RSP. After independence went abroad. Now living in Cairo. His autobiography is being serialised in a Bengali weekly.—1, 21, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 44n, 45, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 215, 222, 223, 226, 227, 228, 229, 249, 250, 506, 523

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Singaravelu, M. (1860-1946)—

One of the early pioneers of the working class and trade union movement in the South. Attended the Gaya Congress (December end 1922) as an AICC member, moved resolution on complete independence, spoke on labour resolution, circulated "New Manifesto for Congressmen" based on M. N. Roy's "programme". He was in touch with

S. A. Dange at Gaya and later. In 1923 organised Labour Kishan Party of Hindustan and published its manifesto (May 1923). There was an arrest warrant against him in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case (April 1924) which was not executed due to his illness and later cancelled. Organised Madras Labour Conference and wrote articles in *Labour Kishan Gazette*. In 1925 December end, presided over the First Communist Conference in Kanpur and delivered an inaugural address. In the twenties and thirties conducted several Tamil journals, among them the weekly *Thozhilali* (Worker)—2, 218, 278, 316, 449, 450, 505, 506, 509, 516, 523, 526, 527, 563, 564, 565, 588, 591, 592, 595

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Singh, Santokh—One of the Punjabi emigrants to California (USA), became general secretary of the Ghadar Party when it was reorganised in 1919-1920. Was arrested and convicted in San Francisco Case. With Rattan Singh went to Soviet Russia to establish the contact of the Ghadar Party with the Comintern, attended with Rattan Singh the 4th Congress of the Comintern. Returned to India in 1925 and

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